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GRADE-ONE CHILDREN'S CONCEPTS OF PURPOSES FOR READING AND OF SELECTED COMPONENTS OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE

by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Grade-One Children's Concepts of Purposes for Reading and of Selected Components of Written Language" submitted by Jean Leask McLaughlin in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined first-grade children's concepts of purposes for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language. As well, the relationship between these concepts and of these concepts to comprehension and method was examined. A 67-question survey, Related Concepts of Reading Questionnaire (RCRQ), was constructed to collect student responses pertaining to the above concepts.

The student sample consisted of 60 subjects from five classrooms in three Edmonton Catholic Schools where each school emphasized a different method of teaching reading: phonic, language experience, and eclectic. Twenty subjects from each school were selected by their respective teachers to represent a cross-section of achievement abilities within the class. All subjects were in their ninth month of first grade.

A descriptive analysis was given of subject responses to target questions on the RCRQ. The significance of relationships was examined through the use of the chi-square statistic.

Results of the analyses revealed that the majority of children could verbalize some purpose for reading, but very seldom were these purposes related to meaning. Most often their answers reflected immediate needs such as "knowing words," "adult approval," or "learning to read." Results further demonstrated that one quarter of the children were unable to offer any reasonable explanation for reading. In addition, results showed that these children could more accurately label words than spaces, letters, or sentences on a page of print and that the precise functions of these terms were conceived in a global

manner.

Significant relationships ($p \leq .05$) were found between: purpose for reading in school and author recognition, purpose for reading at home and function of spaces, purpose for reading in school and method, and comprehension and author recognition.

Results of this study indicated that first-grade children's concepts of purposes for reading held little relation to meaning. Since a significant relationship was found between purpose for reading in school and method, it was suggested that specific lessons might guide children to form a closer association between reading and meaning. It was further suggested that such a teaching focus might produce a more meaningful learning situation for the students. Further research experimenting with different methods of teaching such concepts would be valuable as would a developmental study to note the sequential changes in concepts of the components of written language.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

"Meaningful learning, when meaningful is defined in terms of understanding, is the whole point and focus of the educational enterprise" (Howe, 1972, p. 71). Howe's definition of meaningful learning is drawn from Ausubel (1968) and revolves around two central items, the nature of the learner and the nature of the material to be learned. He stresses the point that meaningful learning is more likely to occur if the material is organized logically and if the material is potentially meaningful to the particular learner. Given these factors it can be seen that Howe defines meaningful learning as the antithesis of rote learning that consists of memorizing a pattern or sequence of words with little attention to the meaning represented.

Ausubel (1963) explains that ". . . meaningful learning implies that it is a characteristic process in which meaning is a product or outcome of learning rather than an attribute of the content that characterizes meaningful learning" (p. 45). When meaningful learning occurs, new material is not merely associated with previously learned ideas, but it is assimilated into the individual's cognitive structure in a hierarchical fashion either subsuming or being subsumed by previously established ideas.

Thus, it can be accepted that causing learning to be meaningful ought to aid the learner. However, the efficacy of such a global statement is difficult to comprehend when one thinks of students in a classroom. Therefore, it might be beneficial to determine if this principle is deemed advantageous when considering the teaching of a complex skill or subject. The skill of reading has been chosen for such consideration in this present study.

Through the years, the thinking of many authorities in the field of reading has paralleled the thinking of learning theorists. In 1937, Ruth Strang asserted that "one of the first steps in acquiring reading ability is to learn that printed words have meaning and significance" (p. 285). In 1957, Magdalen Vernon concurred with Strang, that in the initial stage of learning to read the child should "learn that printed symbols do represent the words which he used in speech . . . It seems essential that he should reach this stage before trying to proceed further" (p. 188). The importance of this step in learning to read was obliquely emphasized by Vygotsky (1962). He stated:

> Our studies show that he (the child) has little motivation to learn writing when we begin to teach it. He feels no need for it and has only a vague idea of its usefulness. (p. 99)

Goodman (1968) found that "many teachers have remarked that reading beginners cannot really make progress in learning to read until they grasp the concept that what they are reading is supposed to make sense, that is, that it can be decoded" (p. 20). Marie Clay (1972) supported Goodman's finding by stating that one of the first concepts a child must learn about written language (the code of reading) is that ". . . the language he/she speaks is related to the written English he/she is trying to read . . ." (p. 151). Rozin, Bressman, and Taft (1974) sum up the position nicely as follows:

> Common sense would hold that it might be useful for a child to grasp the nature of the writing system (meaningful as communication) before delving into its detailed specifics (letter-phoneme mapping). . . . It might be worthwhile to determine whether children are better able to understand the trees (and their relationships) if they are first helped to see the forest. (p. 334)

It would seem that many specialists in the field of reading agree with the aforementioned principle of meaningful learning. Specifically, learning to read might be facilitated if children were made aware that written language is another form of communication, and can be easily related to oral language (from their past experience) which they already regard as highly meaningful. The question, then, might be asked, "Do children conceive of reading in such a meaningful way?"

Problem

Current literature (Clay, 1975; Elkind, 1974; Gibson, 1969; Goodman, 1968; Samuels, 1970; Smith, 1971) has emphasized the fact that the act of reading is a complex and highly abstract process, particularly for the beginning reader (Clay, 1972; Elkind, 1974; Goodman, 1970; Samuels, 1970). Due to the complexities involved in reading, it would be beneficial to explore how children conceive of the components of written language in addition to determining whether they conceive of reading (as a whole) in a meaningful way.

The problem addressed by this study is to investigate young children's concepts of the components of written language as well as their concepts of the general purpose for reading.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate by semi-structured interview grade-one children's concepts of the general purpose for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language (i.e., words, sentences, etc.). The author also sought to explore whether the above concepts were related to the method of instruction under which the children learned to read. Furthermore, the author sought to determine whether the above concepts were related to the children's grade-level score in reading comprehension achievement.

Definitions

The following terms are defined to make explicit the author's frame of reference when attacking the problem studied herein.

Concept: A concept is a mental impression generalized from particular experiences which can be modified or refined as a result of further experiences. It is operationally defined as children's verbalizations in response to target questions asked during the interview.

Reading process: The reading process is the integration of one's past experience and one's knowledge of language with visual perception to extract meaning from print.

The three definitions concerning "methods" are limited by the fact that classrooms following a designated method so identified by central office school board staff were assigned to this study by them. In each definition, the designation was confirmed by observation of this author.

Phonic method: This is a method of teaching reading by associating sounds with individual letters or letter clusters; then blending these discrete sounds to form words. It is operationally defined as a reading program which emphasizes this technique over other methods.

Language experience method: This is a method of teaching reading by having "meaningful experiences with print so as to establish firmly the notion that print is a representation of oral language" (Stauffer, 1970, p. 220). It is operationally defined as a reading program which taught children to read as set out by the Gage Language Experience Reading Program.

Eclectic method: This is a method of teaching reading by a combination of many methods, with no emphasis being placed on any one method in particular. It is operationally defined as a reading program which utilized parts of phonic, language experience, and sight word methods.

Reading comprehension: Reading comprehension is the reconstruction of, inferring of, reaction to, and evaluation of meaning from a series of printed symbols. It is operationally defined by the grade-level score which subjects received on the reading comprehension section of the Canadian Test of Basic Skills.

Selected components of written language: These are operationally defined as print, words, spaces between words, sentences, letters, sound/symbol correspondence, reading as a silent process, and recognition that print has meaning.

Target questions: These are operationally defined as those questions used in the interview which sought answers to the research questions posed for this study.

Research Questions

Several research questions were addressed by this study.

1. What do grade-one children verbalize about the purpose for reading?
2. What do grade-one children verbalize about the following selected components of written language?
    2.1 Which symbols are read (print, pictures, etc.)?
    2.2 When words on a page of print are pointed to, what do grade-one children call them, and what function do they think words perform?
    2.3 What function do grade-one children think spaces perform?
    2.4 When a sentence on a page is isolated, what do grade-one children call a sentence, and what function do they think sentences perform?
    2.5 Of what do grade-one children think words are composed, and what function do they think letters perform?
    2.6 Are grade-one children aware of sound/symbol correspondence?
    2.7 Do grade-one children recognize that the author is the one who wrote the story?
    2.8 Are grade-one children aware that reading can be a silent process?

In addition two related questions were asked:

2.9 What does a good reader have to know?

2.10 Why do teachers ask questions about what children read?

3. Is there a relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language?
4. Is there a relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and the method of instruction under which they were taught to read?
5. Is there a relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their reading comprehension score?
6. Is there a relationship between grade-one children's concepts of selected components of written language and the method of instruction under which they were taught to read?
7. Is there a relationship between grade-one children's concepts of selected components of written language and their reading comprehension grade score?

Hypotheses

Research questions three through seven were amenable to formulation as research hypotheses; they are stated in the null form below. The probability level adopted was .05.

1. There is no significant relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language. (Research Question Three) That is, when the "purpose for reading" question is plotted against research questions 2.1 through 2.10 in a chi square matrix, there

will be no significant relationships.

2. There is no significant relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and the method of instruction under which they are taught to read. (Research Question Four)
3. There is no significant relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their reading comprehension score. (Research Question Five)
4. There is no significant relationship between grade-one children's concepts of selected components of written language and the method of instruction under which they are taught to read. (Research Question Six)
5. There is no significant relationship between grade-one children's concepts of selected components of written language and their reading comprehension score. (Research Question Seven)

Experimental Design

The investigation of grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language was carried out through a survey. The researcher devised a questionnaire to assess the subjects' understanding of the aforementioned concepts. The questionnaire was administered by an interview which contained specific questions but allowed freedom to rephrase or probe when needed. A pilot study was conducted to ensure that grade-one subjects would respond to the questionnaire, and resulted in minor word changes on some of the questions.

The revised questionnaire was then administered individually to sixty grade-one subjects from the Edmonton Catholic School Board, Alberta. All interviews were tape-recorded. For research questions one and two, the subjects' responses were tabulated and categorized. For hypotheses one to five, these responses were cross-tabulated (e.g., concept of purpose for reading in school by concept of a word). The chi-square statistic was used to identify significant relationships among the cross-tabulations.

One month following the collection of data for the main study, twenty subjects were randomly selected to receive the questionnaire a second time. The results were categorized as in the main study and analyzed for test-retest reliability.

Assumptions

Certain assumptions underlaid this study. It was assumed that young children regard their own language as meaningful. It was further assumed that the interviewer was competent enough to detect confusion from the respondents, and accordingly, to interject probing questions to clarify the response. It was also assumed that the presence of a concrete object (a book) facilitated the children's thinking regarding the questions they were asked. Lastly, it was assumed that grade-one children's concepts of word boundaries in their spoken language were probably confused (Downing, 1970; Downing and Oliver, 1974; Holden and MacGinitie, 1972).

Limitations

When questioning young children, one is confronted by many limitations. Young children tire easily, thus, this study does not present a comprehensive description of children's concepts of all the components of written language. Consequently, the results of this study can be generalized concerning only the few components of written language investigated, and only among grade-one children in similar settings. Another limitation regards the designation of teaching-method groups. The investigator was not able to employ any objective technique to determine precisely what methods had been used during the eight months of instruction prior to the present investigation, and had to rely on identification of these by central office personnel of the Edmonton Catholic School Board. Finally, this study is limited by the fact that only children's concepts of written words were elicited; the researcher made no attempt to investigate their concepts of spoken words.

Significance

If reading is to be taught in a meaningful way, it is most important for educators to gain an understanding of how the young beginner thinks about reading in general and about components of written language. As Howe (1972) implied, the nature of the learner is of prime importance when planning for meaningful learning. The findings of the present study might contribute knowledge to increase our understanding of the nature of the young beginning reader.

In addition, the findings might also be used to refine teaching methods. By noting and classifying responses to the questionnaire used in this study, educators can be made aware of how beginning readers regard specific components of written language. Knowing how the beginner thinks, educators can then plan meaningful learning activities to correct or expand concepts of various components of written language.

Lastly, the questionnaire devised for this study might be used diagnostically by teachers of young beginning readers. It offers a quick easy way to discover which concepts are correctly established, and which concepts need further development. A teacher could use such additional knowledge when planning a reading program for one child, or when grouping children according to needs.

Overview

The following report of this study is divided into four chapters. Chapter two offers a discussion of the reading process and a review of the related literature concerning children's concepts of reading and components of written language. Chapter three reports the design, methodology, instruments, and statistical procedures utilized for analysis. Chapter four reports the results of the study according to the research questions specified and discusses the findings. Chapter five offers conclusions, implications for education, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE

The survey is presented in three sections. The first section offers a background for the rationale of this study. The second section relates the theoretical framework of the study. Finally, the last section presents research pertinent to the study.

Background—Meaningful Verbal Learnings

As noted in the previous chapter, meaningful learning is the goal of education (Howe, 1972). Furthermore, meaningful learning is conceptualized as a process where the attainment of meaning is the consequence of the [learning] process (Ausubel, 1963).

Where did the construct of meaningful learning arise? From what research did it evolve? Does it pertain directly to the type of learning needed for reading? The ensuing discussion traces the development of the construct of meaningful learning.

Meaningfulness in Verbal Learning Experiments

Meaningful learning was described as the antithesis of rote learning. Paradoxically, meaningfulness (M), a powerful variable in verbal learning, was discovered and meticulously investigated by researchers studying human rote learning of lists of nonsense syllables and real words (Underwood and Schulz, 1960). Cofer (1969) noted that "M was introduced by Noble (1952) to denote measurements achieved by an association method, the production method" (p. 315).

An M-value for various nonsense syllables and real words was obtained via the production method quite simply. Noble's (1952) subjects were asked to give as many different associations to a stimulus word or syllable, as possible in a one-minute period. The stimulus words were presented a number of times in an attempt to eliminate chaining effects among responses (where the subjects gave a subsequent association to their previous response rather than focusing again on the stimulus in order to form a new association). The mean number of associations formed per word became the M-value for that word.

Words varying along a continuum of M were then used in traditional verbal learning experiments. In memorizing both serial lists and paired associates (presented with one word, the subject memorizes the word that had been presented with it), M was found to be a significant factor. Syllables and words with higher M-values were found to be learned more quickly and retained longer (Underwood and Schulz, 1960).

Consequent to these experiments, several hypotheses accounting for the influence of M were postulated. These hypotheses centered around several basic variables from which M might develop (Underwood and Schulz, 1960): number of associations elicited, familiarity, and pronunciability. Underwood and Schulz (1960, p. 305) concluded that frequency (of experience with verbal units) underlaid the index represented by M.

Thus the construct of meaningfulness in verbal learning is related to word studies. It has been shown that the rote learning of single words is facilitated when their M-value is higher. However, what implications do these findings have for verbal learning involving continuous discourse as encountered when reading? Much learning occurs through reading, where related series of words, not isolated words, provide the stimuli. Since this study focuses on reading, it is important to explore whether children in this study globally recognize that the purpose behind printed connected discourse is to convey meaning.

Ausubel and Meaningful Verbal Learning

Ausubel (1963, p. 36) stressed that his construct of meaningful verbal learning differed markedly from the classical construct of meaningfulness described above. Most importantly, he maintained that meaningfully and rotely learned materials are learned and retained in qualitatively different ways. Rotely learned materials are controlled by the laws of association and are thus subject to interference by similar learning (p. 42). In contrast, meaningfully learned materials are integrated into an individual's cognitive structure in a hierarchical fashion. Such learning is anchored, facilitating both learning and retention (Ausubel, 1968).

It was presumed, by this researcher, that Ausubel's own research in the early 1960's provided the empirical evidence from which the construct of meaningful verbal learning evolved. His research always involved subjects learning from written materials varying in length from one thousand to two thousand words. The focus of the research was on subsumption—the postulated mechanism by which new learning is anchored into one's cognitive structure (Ausubel, 1960, 1961; Ausubel and Fitzgerald, 1962). Subsumption is the result of new learning being related superordinately or subordinately to existing relevant concepts in one's cognitive structure. Thus, the role of past experience is of central importance in meaningful verbal learning. By extension, the conclusion might be drawn that the role of past experience is a critical variable for young children beginning to learn the concepts of reading and related components of written language.

Educators directly concerned with the problem of efficient teaching have suggested ideas corresponding with Ausubel's construct of meaningful verbal learning. Howe (1972, p. 69) and Bergen and Dunn (1976, p. 275) contend that learning verbal material is facilitated when the learner can relate the new material to his past experience. In other words, the relation to past experience causes the process to become meaningful. Stroud (1956) claimed that learning is facilitated by "knowing what one is doing in the learning situation" (p. 116). To know what one is doing in the learning situation, it might be assumed that one would have to relate the current task to previous experience. In 1964, Bigge upheld the same view. He noticed three things in human learning: (1) that "purpose is always involved in understanding, (2) as soon as a person can see what something is for, he understands it, and (3) material which is meaningful is remembered much better than material which is not" (pp. 301, 321).

Ausubel and Robinson (1969, pp. 117-118) reviewed several experimental studies which demonstrated that learning under meaningful conditions was indeed a more efficient process in terms of time needed to reach the criterion level of learning and amount of long-term retention. These studies support Ausubel's (1963) suggestion that meaningful learning holds the quality of substantiveness. That is, understanding is sustained even though styles of expression may vary.

No doubt holding the quality of substantiveness would be desirable and possible when teaching young children to learn to read, thereby firmly establishing desired concepts of reading and related components of written language in the process. In order to do so, it is necessary to understand what is involved in the reading process and what some of the components of written language are. The next section describes the reading process and the components of written language.

Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this section is to specify what is meant by the reading process in this study. In addition, since the focus of this study is on the acquisition of the reading process, the crucial requirements of this stage will be described. The reading process will be discussed first, followed by a discussion of the acquisition of the process.

The Reading Process

The foundation of this study is based on a theory of reading which ascribes to an information processing point of view. In this regard Stauffer (1970) has emphasized that reading is a "dynamic active process" (p. 125). Smith (1971) agrees with this interpretation when he states ". . . reading is not a passive activity—the reader must make an active contribution if he is to acquire the available information." Goodman (1970) suggests that, "Reading is a selective process.

It involves partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation" (p. 260). These "language cues" embody three types of information: graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic (Goodman, 1973, p. 25). In Smith's (1971) opinion a reader's ability to select minimal cues develops as he/she learns to "group his information into larger and larger units" (p. 218). The reader can examine the visual image for letter recognition, word recognition or meaning. The fluent reader intent on meaning grasps letters and/or words only as needed, using the other grouping strategies when unfamiliar words are encountered (Smith, 1971, p. 219).

Goodman (1970) continues that once "partial information is processed . . . [the reader] predicts and anticipates on the basis of this information . . . just enough to confirm his guess of what is coming . . ." (p. 266). Smith (1971) suggests that this aspect of reading can be regarded as a "reduction of uncertainty" (p. 12). Both men, Smith and Goodman, agree that the mechanism of "redundancy—of information from a variety of sources—[permits] knowledge of the world and language [to] reduce the need for visual information from the printed page" (Smith, 1971, p. 12) and thus "makes prediction possible" (Goodman, 1970, p. 266).

To summarize, this position portrays a reader who actively couples his/her visual perception of a graphic array with his/her knowledge of the graphophonic, syntactic and semantic redundancies occurring in written language and his/her past experience to arrive at a meaningful communication with the author (Goodman, 1970, pp. 260-

266; Massaro, 1976, p. 259; Smith, 1971, pp. 12-26). The degree to which a reader utilizes available information to react to meaning abstracted from print (Stauffer, 1970, p. 135) generally varies with the reader's specific experience with print (Smith, 1971, p. 3). In other words, the dominant systems used by the beginning reader differ from those used by fluent readers. Because this study focuses on beginning readers, it is necessary to delineate what is involved in the acquisition stage of reading.

Acquisition of Reading

To arrive at the level where a reader can utilize minimal language cues to scan the print for meaning, test that meaning on the basis of criteria established through past experience, and reach a decision to accept or reject the new information gleaned, takes considerable training. Thus, the skill of reading has been analyzed and broken down into parts in many different ways in an attempt to discover an efficient way to teach the beginner. Carroll (1970) argued that reading "has numerous components and each component has to be learned and practiced" (p. 297). The following discussion highlights the essential components necessary to acquire the skill of reading. The order in which these components are presented is not prescriptive nor is it meant to suggest that they should be taught as such.

The first most obvious component to consider is that it is helpful for the beginning readers to speak the language that they are going to learn to read (Carroll, 1970). This component facilitates learning to read for the young child "because the purpose of reading is to help him [interact with] messages from print that are similar to the messages he can already understand if they are spoken" (Carroll, 1970, p. 297). To avoid undue bias against subjects in this study, only subjects who spoke English in the home were used.

Another component involves visual discrimination training to recognize the invariant features of letters of the alphabet. These must be recognized across many print styles. Then the beginning reader must recognize the "left-to-right principle by which letters" are combined into words "and put into order in continuous text" (Carroll, 1970, p. 298). The beginner must also learn that "there are highly probable patterns of correspondence between letters [letter clusters] and sounds, and he must learn those patterns of correspondence [sound/symbol association] will help him recognize words he already knows in spoken language . . ." (p. 298). Recognition of sound/symbol association was included in the present study. The word "boy" (in the book used throughout the investigation) was pointed to by the interviewer. The subject was asked, "Would this word say "toy"? Why? or Why not?"

The beginner must come to realize that letter-sequences which are separated by space, in a line of print, constitute words. In addition he must realize that "printed words are signals for spoken words and that they have meanings analagous to those of spoken words" (Carroll, 1970, p. 299). In the present study, children's concepts of printed words and how they are bounded were assessed through the following questions. The examiner pointed to several words and asked, "What are these?" If no response was given, this question was asked, "What are these called?" It was followed by, "What are ______ for?"

(The blank was filled by the subjects' prior response.) The same question format was used again, except that "spaces" were pointed to.

Slowly the beginner becomes aware that strings of printed words coalesce to offer relational messages and that relations may not always be stated explicitly, but that inference from the reader is expected. This component was assessed in the present study by the Canadian Test of Basic Skills—Reading Comprehension section. This series of three subtests required relational thinking on the literal as well as inferential level.

Closely associated to perceiving relational messages is the recognition that word meaning varies with the context. The beginner must become flexible and use whatever cues are available (graphophonic, syntactic, or semantic) to determine the specific meaning suggested by a particular context (Carroll, 1970, p. 298). Furthermore, he/she must come to realize that groups of words might represent a unitary concept (e.g., into the house). In this manner the beginning reader can learn to "reason . . . about what he reads within the limits of his talent and experience" (p. 299).

This component of perceiving relational messages was excluded from study in the present investigation. At such a young age, it would be difficult to assess this component purely without using elaborate clinical methods. For example, one would have to analyze how each individual subject processed print when reading isolated words and connected discourse, analyze the free recall of what had been read and analyze what questions the examiner would have posed to elicit recall of more information. Because the purpose of this study was to analyze what grade one children were able to communicate themselves regarding selected concepts involved in reading, the above component was necessarily excluded.

In addition, at some point, the beginning reader should realize that lines of print can be a graphic representation of speech, a more familiar communication mode. However, when reading, the reader can exercise the option of recoding to sound in order to decode, or merely decoding silently to reconstruct and react to the meaning of the message (Goodman, 1970, p. 265). Finally, while reacting to the abstracted message, the beginning reader must learn to acknowledge the author of that message.

In the present study, these latter three components were assessed. The first was evaluated by subjects' responses to the question described earlier "Would this word say 'toy'?" If subjects responded "no" with adequate substantiation, one could conclude that they realized that print represents speech. The second component was assessed by asking subjects a series of questions, "Do you speak when you read? Do you have to speak when you read? Why? Why not? How else can you read? Tell me about it." By their responses, one could judge whether or not they recognized reading as a silent as well as an oral process. The third component was assessed in an equally simple way. The interviewer pointed to the author's name and asked, "What does this tell you?".

Thus it can be seen that "reading" represents a highly abstract and complex skill. It embodies many components, the learning of which entails a mighty task for the young child embarking upon learning this skill. For the young child what does reading represent? How does he conceive of the written language phenomena called letters, words, sentences, etc.? What purposes does he attach to these phenomena? The next section will review the literature that has attempted to answer some of these questions.

Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this section is to review the literature pertinent to this study. This review will be conducted in two parts. First research relating to children's concepts of a word will be discussed, then research relating to children's concepts of reading and other components of written language will be discussed.

Research Related to Children's Concepts of a Word

Several researchers have investigated the ability of young children to segment words in a conventional manner. Those studies reporting results of segmented words presented orally will be discussed first. Then studies reporting results of segmenting written words will be discussed.

Holden and MacGinitie (1972) conducted a study to test the ability of 84 kindergarten children to segment words presented in a flow of speech conventionally. Taped phrases and short sentences were presented to the subjects individually. When the subject could repeat the utterance he/she was instructed to repeat it again, tapping a poker chip for each word. Preceding the test items, the subjects were trained in the procedure. Holden and MacGinitie found that function words were more difficult to isolate than words more laden with meaning (content words), for example, "the" versus "bones." Generally, the greater the proportion of content words in an utterance, the higher the percentage of conventional segmentation.

In the present study subjects were asked to identify groups of letters separated by spaces as "words." To do so, they were presented with a conventional page of print in a book. The print on this page contained both function and content words: 72% were content words, 28% were function words. Thus the nature of the stimuli presented to the subjects should not have made the task unduly difficult.

Downing (1970) investigated young children's concepts of a word presented aurally. Downing presented 13 five-year-old English children with a variety of auditory stimuli: nonverbal noise, human utterance of a short vowel, human utterance of a single word, a phrase, and a sentence. The subjects' first task was to respond "yes" if they heard a word and "no" if they did not hear a word. The second task was to respond "yes" if they heard a sound and "no" if they did not. Downing found that not one subject could identify a word according to the adult concept and no subject could identify a sound as a single phoneme. However, due to the small number of children used in the study, the ambiguity of the word "sound" and the lack of pretraining, these results should be interpreted cautiously.

In 1974, Downing and Oliver improved Downing's (1970) concept of a word study. They included a wider range of auditory stimuli, used 42 Canadian children from three age levels, and pretrained the subjects. The stimuli classes now included were: non-verbal abstract (dice rattling), nonverbal real-life (cat meowing), isolated phonemes, isolated syllables, short words, long words, phrases and sentences. The age groups were divided as: 4.5 years to 5.5 years, 5.6 years to 6.5 years and 6.6 to 8.0 years. The subjects' task was to respond "yes" only when they heard a single word.

The results (Downing and Oliver, 1974) demonstrated none of the children had an adequate concept of a spoken word—they all confused isolated phonemes and syllables with words. These findings did show that the subjects' concept of a word improved (approached the conventional idea) with age. Children in the middle age group excluded long words from their concept of a spoken word; this trait was also seen by Meltzer and Herse (1969) and will be discussed below.

These three studies show that young children, before and at the age of a beginning reader, as well as before and after the initiation of formal instruction, do not conceive of a spoken "word" in the conventional manner. The present study made no attempt to assess the children's concepts of spoken word segmentation and this has already been recognized as a limitation of the study.

One researcher, Francis (1973) contends that the concept of a "word" in spoken language does not emerge until children have had experience with print and reading. Since the present study centered around written language, it was decided to note if young children's concepts of a written word were confused. The following studies investigated concepts of written word segmentation.

Meltzer and Herse (1969) studied the ability of 39 grade-one children to visually discriminate the boundaries of written words.

The subjects were presented with a sentence and asked to draw a circle around each of the words. The errors made fell into six categories from which Meltzer and Herse inferred a sequence of development of the concept of a written word. They suggested that first children equate letters with words, then they combine letters with no regard to space. Next, they often combine two words and then divide words in places other than where tall letters are. Finally, before they divide words correctly, they seem to focus on letters with ascending vertical lines as a cue for segmentation (e.g., downt/own). Meltzer and Herse noted that the ability to form correct segmentations was related to reading group placement in a positive manner—the higher the placement, the more correct segmentations a subject made. Rather than relate recognition of word boundaries with reading group placement, in the present study, recognition of word boundaries was related with reading comprehension achievement (grade-level score), in this author's opinion, a more objective way.

Holden and MacGinitie (1972) tested 54 kindergarten children's ability to match a spoken utterance with a written representation of the utterance. This matching-test succeeded the "talking and tapping" task described on page 22. After subjects tapped for each "word" they were instructed to count the number of chips they would tap and then point to the printed sentence (one of four presented) which contained the same number of words. They found that the subjects were quite unaware of the printing convention. Consequently, the examiners taught the subjects that words were made of letters and words were separated by space on the printed page. They found that even after teaching, no children consistently chose the conventional printed segmentation to represent an utterance.

In this author's opinion, the above task seems quite complicated for kindergarten children. Possibly some subjects used in the above study might have been confused by the "counting" step and consequently perceived no relation between the number of written words presented and the earlier task of tapping once for every word heard. This component was not assessed the same way in the present study. Subjects in this study had to recognize conventional printing segmentation in order to respond correctly to the question asking about sound/symbol association (see page 27).

Mickish (1974) taught 117 grade-one children to draw vertical lines between four circles. Then she presented them with a sentence where the words ran together (e.g., Thecatandthedogplayball). Their task was to draw lines between the words. The subjects were divided into four groups according to which level of basal reader test they were ready to take. The subjects' ability to conventionally segment the words improved with their basal reader test level, thus supporting the Meltzer and Herse (1969) study. Since this present study used a survey format, drawing tasks were not included; instead, the purpose was to elicit verbalizations from subjects regarding such concepts.

Rozin, Bressman, and Taft (1974) tested kindergarten and grade-two children's ability to match a spoken word with its written counterpart in two different tasks. In the first task the examiner (E) spoke two words in succession (one a single syllable, the other a multisyllabic word). Then two cards were presented each containing one word and the subjects had to point to the word asked for by the E and substantiate their choice.

In the second task (Rozin et al., 1974), long and short target words were spelled out in large plastic letters (unobserved by the child) then placed in a correspondingly large or small box for the child's viewing. Next lids were placed on the boxes and the E asked which box contained a particular word. In this way subjects could detect no first letter clues, but they were still in the presence of a concrete object denoting the length of the two words. Presumably, this procedure was used to reduce the load on these young subjects' memories. Thus this task tested the subjects' ability to match the length of a spoken word with the length of box within his view. Again subjects had to explain why their choice was made.

These researchers (Rozin et al., 1974) found that 43% of the suburban kindergarten children made correct associations with adequate reasons. Only 8% of the urban children met this criterion. However, by the second grade the urban percentage rose considerably.

In the present study, the aim was to assess a finer level of recognition and discrimination more necessary to reading. Subjects were asked to note the mismatch between a spoken, single syllable word (toy) with a printed word (boy). This demanded a fine sense of discrimination, sound/symbol association, "tuh" sound/letter "b." Rozin et al. (1974) employed a test of grosser matching ability in which long sound sequences go with many letters, shorter sound sequences go with fewer letters. Such tasks were not included in the present study.

All of the above procedures assessed the young child's concept of a printed word by some sort of task performance. In contrast, the present study used a technique more suited to an interview approach, as described on page 60, in which the author was able to determine if grade-one children spontaneously labeled words as adults do, and if they understood how words were segmented in print.

However, investigating grade-one children's concepts of written words composed only one aspect of the present study. Questions regarding other selected components of reading grew out of the following research.

Children's Concepts of Reading and Written Language

Several researchers have attempted to investigate children's concepts of reading or selected components of written language. The earliest studies focused on very general impressions regarding reading. In 1959, McConkie and Nixon sought information from kindergarten children regarding their expectations about learning to read. They used an interview technique in which questions were asked about situational pictures that were accompanied by brief stories. The responses were classified into five sections: awareness of reading in their environment, definitions of reading and their own reading ability, desire to read, ideas regarding the method by which reading would be taught, and ideas regarding who would learn to read.

The McConkie and Nixon (1959) technique demanded that the children imagine what reading might be like and abstract information from that image to answer questions. It would seem that kindergarten children's attention span might have fluctuated considerably under such an abstract task. Although most of the questions were short, some were quite lengthy and might have strained the children's short term memory.

Prior to formal reading instruction, McConkie and Nixon (1959) found great variability among the children's definitions of reading. This finding would be expected since the past experiences of the children probably varied from never having been read to by parents to knowing how to read already. No information was given regarding this factor. A study which interviewed children after experience with reading had begun in school, could assume that all the subjects had received some similar experiences with print and reading in school. Therefore, the present study used subjects after a common period of formal reading instruction, eight months. This would not only reduce the amount of varying experiences contributing to the subjects' verbalizations of the purpose for reading, but it might also provide valuable information regarding the teaching approaches used with the subjects.

In addition, questioning the subjects' definitions of reading was altered to ask them why they thought people read (purpose for reading). The present study also included questions concerning awareness of reading in the subjects' environments (Do Mom and Dad read? What do they read?), awareness of subjects' own reading abilities (How well do you read?), and desire to read (Do you like to read? What do you like to read?). Since the subjects used in this study had been instructed in reading for eight months, it was unnecessary to ask how they thought reading would be taught and who would learn.

In 1961, Edwards devised a Reading Concept Test to be used with grade-five children. The test used a forced choice technique (between two answers) and multiple-choice technique (among 20 answers). It attempted to assess children's general concepts of why learning to read was important, what the qualities of a good reader were, and whether subjects read more for themselves or read to please the teacher. Edwards also included a questionnaire completed by the teacher regarding her perceptions of each pupil as a "reader."

As already indicated, in the present study, the notion of why learning to read is important was assessed by questioning subjects about the purpose for reading. Questions regarding the qualities of a good reader were also included (What does a good reader have to know? Does a good reader answer all the questions? Why?). Reading for self and reading to please the teacher was assessed by asking subjects, "Why do you read in school?" and "Why do you read at home?"

Edwards (1961) classified the answers to his test in terms of functional and form responses. Functional responses were defined as "getting meaning from print," or reading as "a tool for enjoyment or learning." Form responses were defined in terms of "correct pronunciation, being in a particular reading group, reading orally, etc." These responses were then quantified, one point for each functional response, and a zero for each form response. It seems unusual to offer no credit for form responses since the subjects would merely reflect what they had learned. Should subjects be penalized for not having the opportunity to learn to define reading "functionally"? This technique might have been improved by the inclusion of a "dummy" choice so that children who had neither a functional or form concept of reading could have been recognized. Would not a form response have been rated higher than no response at all? Once scores were obtained, they were then correlated with reading achievement and intelligence (as measured by the Stanford Achievement Reading Test, California Reading Test, and the Lorge-Thorndike Group Intelligence Test, respectively). Edwards found no significant relation among any of the variables.

Muskopf (1962) adapted Edwards' method to investigate grade-one children's concepts of reading in relation to the method of instruction (eclectic and phonic), intelligence and reading achievement. His test was modeled after Edwards (1961) using appropriate language for grade-one children. The test items were read orally by the E and scored one point for each functional response and zero for a form response the children gave. Muskopf found a trend for the eclectic method group to produce more functional responses but it was not significantly different from the phonic group. The consideration that responses might vary with the method of instruction was also included in the present study when responses were compared across three method groups: phonic, language experience, and eclectic.

Muskopf (1962) found no significant correlations between concept of reading and reading achievement or intelligence (as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test and Kuhlman-Anderson Intelligence Test, respectively). He suggested that the test might have been assessing conformity rather than true concepts of reading. For example, when presented with the following forced choice:

Which do you think is better?

1. ______ John reads a book because he enjoys it.

2. ______ John reads a book because the teacher tells him to.

Muskopf reasoned that subjects may have chosen number two because they were in school at the time, performing a school-like task and wanted their teacher to like them. As can also be seen in the above example, both choices are correct. Thus, from question to question, the subjects may have been responding in an arbitrary manner, varying their criteria for judging as they proceeded. The present study used a semi-structured interview to allow subjects the opportunity to clarify their responses.

In 1963, Denny and Weintraub proposed to study questions with 111 children entering grade one. The results were reported in 1965 and 1966. The first question was "What is reading?" The responses were classified in seven ways: (1) no response, (2) unclear, (3) cognitive (reading as how to learn things), (4) object-related (in relation to a book or magazine, etc.), (5) valuative (good or bad), (6) mechanical (words and sounds) and (7) expectation (something we have to learn to do). They (1965) reported that only 20% of the children thought of reading as a meaningful act and suggested that kindergarten experience may aid the development of children's perceptions of the reading process.

In 1966, Denny and Weintraub reported the results of two additional questions: Why do you want to learn how to read? and "What do you have to do to learn how to read in first grade?" Responses to the second question were classified into seven categories. The first two categories were identical to those mentioned in the paragraph above; the other categories were: (3) intrinsic (performance of the act for some reason), (4) goal-seeking (go to college, be smart, know what is happening), (5) valuative (as above), (6) identification (to be like someone else, parent, sibling, etc.) and (7) negative (I don't want to). Twenty-five percent of the responses fell into categories (1) and (2). Of the remaining responses, most fell into categories (3) and (4). The exact percentages are not reported herein, because they were originally calculated (Denny and Weintraub, 1966) as percentages of the remaining 75% of responses, not percentages of the total number of subjects.

In the 1966 Denny and Weintraub study, the responses to the third question, "What do you have to do to learn how to read in the first grade?" were classified in five categories: (1) and (2) were the same as previously mentioned, (3) obedience-oriented (mind the teacher, do what she says), (4) other-directed, and (5) self-directed (guess words, read to myself). Thirty-four percent of these responses were placed in categories (1) and (2). Of the remaining responses, most were placed in categories (3) and (5). The exact percentages are not mentioned herein, due to the problem mentioned above. However, they concluded that one quarter of these children could express absolutely no logical reason for learning to read. In further conclusion they emphasized the need for teachers to outline to their pupils the purpose for reading.

> Most research on learning to read supports the proposition that it helps the child to learn if he knows the reason for a learning situation and sees a purpose in the task. (Denny and Weintraub, 1966, p. 446)

Though this writer would like to know specifically what research he would advance to support the above proposition, the point was well-made and is substantiated as in Section One of this chapter.

However, do the questions above give an accurate description of children's concepts of reading? This author was concerned about children's concepts of the components of reading as well as their overall impression of its purpose. Therefore, the present study included many questions in hopes of gaining a more comprehensive idea of how young children regard reading. (See Appendix A for the questionnaire used.)

In 1966, Stewart extended the McConkie and Nixon (1959) method for investigation to kindergarten and grade one children. He used the same procedure with only minor alterations such as the addition of "why?" after some of the responses. Stewart (1966) included a teacher questionnaire, also. He also found no significant correlation between the readers' concept of reading and reading achievement (as measured by the California Reading Achievement Test). The problems mentioned earlier (with the McConkie and Nixon study) might have confounded these findings also.

These early studies investigated very general aspects of reading. The researchers (Denny and Weintraub, 1965, 1966; Edwards, 1961; McConkie and Nixon, 1959; Muskopf, 1962; Stewart, 1966) were concerned with the reader's definition of reading or expectancy of what reading would entail and the reader's feelings about reading. They did not attempt to explore whether children could see the utility of learning the subskills (related to components of written language) necessary for reading to occur. The following studies attempted to investigate children's conceptions of various components of written language in addition to the overall purpose for reading.

Reid (1966) conducted an exploratory study with 12 Scottish five-year-olds during the first year of formal reading instruction. She interviewed them regarding their perceptions of reading and writing. She used open-ended questions which elicited responses concerning concepts of books, words, what makes reading hard, letter-sound correspondence, methods of word-attack, and word boundaries. Reid found that even by the end of the first year, most of the children had not formed the concept of written words as composed of letters nor had they realized that written words were related to speech and meaning. In other words, these children did not seem aware of the purpose behind written language and learning to read.

In 1967, Mason interviewed 178 three- to five-year-olds. He asked them four very general questions: (1) Do you like to read? Can you do it all by yourself? (2) Would you like to be able to read? (3) Does anyone in your family read? and (4) Do you like __________ to read? The majority of these pre-school children liked to read (though most all of them meant following along while someone else read out loud) and said someone in the home read.

Downing (1970) replicated and extended Reid's (1966) study with 13 five-year-olds in England. The results of his interview confirmed Reid's findings. He also employed concrete stimuli to determine if the children could recognize a reading situation (pictures) and recognize that print could convey a message (bus destinations). Downing felt that the concrete stimuli gave a more sensitive index of the children's perceptions regarding print. Finally Downing gave two auditory awareness tests. One test asked the subjects to distinguish recorded sounds on the basis of words or not words, the second to distinguish the same sounds on the basis of sounds or not sounds. (See page 23.)

The features which Reid (1966) and Mason (1967) investigated above were included in the present study. In addition, Downing's (1970) finding that children verbalized more in the presence of concrete objects was incorporated. The interview in the present study, focused upon a book written for a grade-one child which was present for the duration of the interview.

In 1972, Clay devised a test which assessed even more components of reading (Sand Test), but omitted the global consideration of the purpose for reading. This assessment considered such elements as, where to start reading a book, where to start reading a page, which direction one reads continuous discourse, does one read print or pictures, recognition of word order in sentences, concept of punctuation, in addition to word boundaries and sound/symbol correspondence. Clay contends that these concepts are of prime importance for the beginning reader.

All of the above features were included in the present study except recognition of word order in sentences. The researcher felt that this necessitated a measure of reading ability beyond the stated purpose of this study, to collect verbalizations regarding concepts of the components of written language and the purpose for reading. To judge recognition of word order in sentences would have required proof that the subjects were able to "read" the words in the given sentence. This would have demanded other experimental techniques beyond the proposed survey.

In a longitudinal study, Francis (1973) investigated 50 English five- to seven-year-olds' comprehension of "instructional terms (letter, word, sentence) and their abilities to identify units in written and spoken language while they learn to read" (p. 17). The subjects were given the Schonell Graded Word Reading Test and the vocabulary section of the Stanford-Binet to obtain measures of reading progress and general understanding of concepts. In addition the subjects were interviewed to obtain a measure of their understanding of the concept of letter, word, and sentence. They were asked "Can you tell me a letter; any letter you know?" This was followed by "What do we use letters for?" (The protocol was repeated for word and sentence.) Then the subjects had to identify printed examples of each (recognition task).

When asking for examples of a letter or word (interview), Francis (1973) received letters, numbers, names of words. When she asked for an example of a word, she also, sometimes, was given a sentence. When examples of sentences were requested, Francis received words and sentences but no isolated letters. Results of the recognition task indicated that the concept of a letter was least troublesome, but some confusion did exist. The concept of word was confused with letter until the children reached age seven. The concept of "sentence" was confused with "word" until age seven also.

Francis (1973) concluded that the findings from both the interview and recognition task indicated that children learned the concept of letter before "word" and "word" before "sentence." She found their responses "more discriminating in the case of letter than for 'word' or 'sentence'" (p. 20). Examples are given below:

	Undiscriminating response	Discriminating response
What do we use		
a. letters for?	writing helping us read	writing words spelling making words
b. words for?	writing reading	names making sentences
c. sentences for?	----	making stories poem letters (postal) writing news

Very few replies indicated an awareness of the use of words or "sentences" in spoken language.

Francis (1973) rank-ordered the subjects' scores for reading skill (word identification test), general vocabulary and technical vocabulary (this score represented a composite of the number of correct examples given and the number of correct responses made during the recognition task). She found a "high" correlation (Kendall $t = .41$, $p < .001$) between reading skill and technical vocabulary. When general vocabulary was statistically controlled, there still remained a considerable correlation (partial Kendall = .34). This author agrees with Francis' interpretation that factors other than "general ability to deal with abstract concepts were involved in learning technical vocabulary" (p. 22).

However, several points might be questioned. (1) Does a word identification test represent a valid measure of "reading skill"? It might be contended that a reading comprehension test represents a more well-rounded picture of one's reading skill, since understanding as well as word identification are needed. (2) Does a correlation of .41 indicate a "high" measure of association? This correlation coefficient indicates that only 17% of the total variation in technical vocabulary scores was explained by knowing word identification scores. In the present study, though subjects did not receive a "score" for the types of concepts held regarding technical vocabulary, the types of responses they made were cross-tabulated with their reading comprehension scores to note if any significant relationships existed.

Johns (1974) compared fourth and fifth grade children's concepts of reading with their reading comprehension achievement (as measured by the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests). The subjects were divided into two groups, "good" and "poor" readers, on the basis of their achievement scores. They were then interviewed individually and asked, "What is reading?" Johns classified the responses as meaningful or nonmeaningful. "Meaningful" responses were categorized as word recognition (saying words), meaning or understanding (understanding the story) and meaning and word recognition (saying the words and understanding the story). "Nonmeaningful" responses were categorized as no response and classroom procedures (read a story and do workbook pages). Johns found that the good and poor readers differed significantly in their concepts of reading. He noted that the results supported the hypothesis that good readers gave significantly more meaningful responses than did poor readers. The present study sought to discover if there was any relation between level of reading comprehension (high, middle, and low) and concept of the purpose for reading.

In 1976, Tovey attempted to determine children's understanding of four selected psycholinguistic concepts: (1) reading as a silent process, (2) reading as deriving meaning from written language, (3) reading as a predictive process, and (4) reading as involving three cue systems, graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic. He used 30 children as subjects, five from each grade, one through six, that were selected by their teachers.

To assess concept one Tovey (1976) asked the subjects to read a paragraph; only six spontaneously read silently, and none of these were in grades one or two. He surmised that children therefore perceive reading as an oral process. An equally logical conclusion would have been, that these subjects had formed an environmentally discriminative response to the command "read." When confronted by a teacher-type-authority in the school setting, they read as teachers in their classrooms generally expected them to, orally.

In contrast, the present study used a series of related questions to determine if children were aware of reading as a silent process. The questions posed were: "Do you speak when you read? Do you have to speak when you read? Why? Do you always speak when you read in school? Why? at home? Why?" If the subjects persistently gave a "yes" response they were then asked, "Is there any other way to read?" If a "no" response was encountered, the subject was asked "How else can you read?" Thus, even if a child preferred to read orally he/she was given a chance to show whether or not he/she was aware that one could read another way.

To assess the second concept, Tovey (1974) asked subjects "What do you think you do when you read?" Forty-three percent equated reading with looking at, pronouncing, learning or thinking about words. Twenty-eight percent said reading had something to do with meaning. The remaining responses were classified as "other." The outcome of responses is not surprising when one considers the form of the question. When asked "What do you do?" the tendency is to report the mechanics of an operation.

The present study attempted to tap children's recognition of this concept indirectly. The question was asked, "When you read, why does the teacher ask questions?" Thus, the subjects had to think how they usually responded to the teachers' questions and then determine the purpose of those questions. If teachers questioned their students for understanding of the message presented, the author reasoned that the subjects would respond accordingly.

To assess the third concept, Tovey (1974) asked "Do you look at every word when you read? Do you need to?" These questions were repeated using "letter" also. Eighty-three percent of the subjects thought they looked at every word and 53% thought this was necessary. Only 57% of the subjects thought they looked at every letter when they read and 33% of those thought this was necessary.

To assess the last concept, Tovey (1974) asked subjects to explain their method for decoding unfamiliar words after they read their paragraph. He concluded from their responses that 28 subjects used only graphophonic cues and two subjects used semantic and syntactic cues. The assessment of these last two concepts was excluded from the present study because it was thought that it would be easier for grade-one children to talk about the purpose for reading and the components of written language, rather than details of the process itself.

Though Rozin et al. (1974) and Denny and Weintraub (1966) compared children's concepts of components of written language across social settings (urban versus suburban versus rural), this writer is aware of only one study that has compared such concepts across cultural settings. Downing, Ollila, and Oliver (1975) used the Canadian Reading Readiness Battery to assess the language and writing concepts of 92 Canadian white kindergarteners and 72 Canadian Indian kindergarteners. The test has the following five sections: (1) orientation to literacy (subject must select pictures which demonstrate reading behavior), (2) understanding literacy behavior (again selecting pictures demonstrating reading or writing behavior), (3) technical language of literacy (i.e., subject must find a "word" in a row of various printed items), (4) visual letter recognition and letter-name knowledge (visual discrimination of letters in relation to their name) and (5) initial phonemes (selecting a picture beginning with the same phoneme as another picture specified by the examiner). From examples of the test given in Evanechko, Ollila, Downing, and Braun (1973), it was noted that the pictures and words used reflect attributes of a white culture rather than an Indian culture.

The results indicated that the Indian children scored significantly lower than the white children on every subtest ($p < .01$). Downing et al. (1975) attributed this difference to the fact that the Indian culture provided less experience with literacy behavior. An alternative interpretation might be that the Indian children simply did not respond to the types of pictures used in the test.

Generalizations Drawn from the Literature

In this chapter, three main topics were discussed: meaningful verbal learning, the reading process with particular emphasis on the acquisition of reading, and literature relating children's concepts of reading and components of written language. To highlight the major points discussed, several generalizations were drawn; these are presented below.

1. The construct of meaningful verbal learning differs markedly from the construct of meaningfulness of classical verbal learning experiments.
2. Reading is a dynamic interactive process in which the reader learns to predict on the basis of minimal information from the page as experience with reading increases.
3. Reading consists of many subskills requiring much training to be effectively used.
4. Young children's concepts of written and spoken words differ greatly from conventional definitions.
5. There is no significant relationship between reading

comprehension and concepts of reading or between intelligence and concepts of reading (Edwards, 1961; Muskopf, 1962; Stewart, 1966).

6. There is no significant relationship between concepts of reading and method of instruction (Muskopf, 1962).
7. Many young children do not have a well-founded reason for learning to read (Denny and Weintraub, 1966; Downing, 1970; Reid, 1966).
8. Children's concepts of a word, sentence, and letter improve with age.
9. During an interview, young children appeared to respond better to questions when the question related to a concrete object present during the interview (Downing, 1970).

Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

A survey was developed to collect data for the present study. This chapter describes the sample, the instruments used, the development of the survey, the procedure followed, the categorization of the data, and the types of data analyses performed.

Sample

The population from which the sample was drawn was defined as grade-one children of the Edmonton Catholic School Board in the city of Edmonton, Alberta. From this population, the Edmonton Catholic School Board was petitioned to locate three different groups, each reflecting a different teaching method. One was to consist of grade-one children who had learned to read under instructional methods which emphasized phonics. Instructional methods for a second group were to be defined by an emphasis on language experience, whereas the third group was to emphasize an eclectic approach. These groups were referred to as the phonic (P), eclectic (E), and language experience (LE) groups. Although the author recognized that "pure" methods approaches probably never exist, it was suspected that teachers' influence would strongly shape the nature of the concepts children form about the problem investigated herein.

The Edmonton Catholic School Board's central office staff identified five classes in three schools from which the sample was selected. One class using a language experience approach was identified in one school, two classes were identified using a phonic approach from a second, and from a third school another two classes were identified using an eclectic approach.

Once the groups had been identified, the teachers were requested to select students for the interview using the following criteria:

1. Choose children who speak English at home.
2. Choose children to represent a cross-section of reading achievement abilities within the class, that is, high, average, and low.[1]

Due to the absence of any previous achievement ratings by which the researcher could easily select a cross-section of students, it was felt that the teachers themselves could make the most accurate decision in this regard.

Thus, for the LE-group, 20 subjects (Ss) were selected from the one class. In the P-group, 20 Ss were selected from the two classes combined and treated as one (as it was impossible to get 10 evenly from each class). In the E-group it was possible to select 20 students, 10 coming from each of the two classes. The total sample included 60 Ss, 20 Ss per method group. The sample consisted of 33 boys and 27 girls.

The three schools assigned for this study were located in two widely separated geographic areas of Edmonton. The student population of each school respresented a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, Italian, Portugese, French, Yugoslavian, Irish, and Canadian. All the Ss selected spoke English in the home but this did not preclude a speaking knowledge of another language.

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[1] It should be noted that these high, average, and low designations were relevant only to each class. That is, an "average" student from one of these classes may have been considered a "low" student at another school within the same city. The range of abilities and concentration of Ss per achievement level are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1 (see pages 52 and 53).

A brief description of the materials and methods employed by the teachers of each group follows.

Phonic Group: By observation, the researcher noted that subjects in this group were taught to read by associating sounds with the written symbols, letters. Two classes were operated jointly by two teachers in a team situation. The reading program seemed individualized and no particular reading series was used. The environment was semi-structured and contained various activity centers where children worked.

Language Experience Group: The teacher for this group indicated that she used the Language Experience Reading Program (Gage, 1966) to teach her students. The kindergarten teacher apparently started the children on level one and the grade-one teacher continued in the fall where she had stopped. In this program, a child's first encounter with written language and formal reading grew out of his own oral language. The children discussed an event and the teacher wrote their comments on the board bringing in capitals and correct punctuation. Then this was followed by guided reading. Then the group composition was duplicated on paper and the children illustrated it as well as read it on their own.

Eclectic Group: The teachers for this group taught students to read using a combination of the approaches mentioned above as well as work on identifying words by sight. Traditional basal readers formed the core of this reading program (Nelson, n.d.). Supplementary instruction in phonics was given through worksheet activities acquired from a variety of sources. Occasionally the children made group stories which they also read.

Instruments

The Survey

The Related Concepts of Reading Questionnaire (RCRQ) was developed to be administered by semi-structured (or personal) interview. It was decided to use open-ended questions to allow the interviewer freedom to probe or rephrase questions when she perceived misunderstanding by the subject. Many of the questions centered around one of two books, which were present during each interview. The presence of the concrete object was to help the young subjects mediate the meaning of the questions and focus their attention as well (Downing, 1970; Elkind, 1975; Piaget in Flavell, 1963).

The RCRQ was divided into six sections (the subjects were unaware of such divisions). Questions in the first section dealt with the physical aspects of reading, identifying a book, where to start, which direction to proceed, etc. In the second section, questions attempted to ascertain subjects' concepts of letters, words, sentences, sound/symbol correspondence and limited punctuation. The third section dealt with the qualities of good readers and the purpose for the teacher's questions about a reading selection. In the fourth section, questions examined the home reading environment and subjects' concepts of oral and silent reading while in the fifth section, questions examined subjects' concepts of an author. The last section contained questions regarding subjects' feelings about reading and their concepts of the purpose(s) for reading. (Appendix A contains a copy of the entire questionnaire and directions for administration.)

The five questions of section I on the RCRQ evolved from Clay's test (1972). Ideas for the sixteen questions of section II were stimulated by previous research and were included to confirm or disconfirm such findings (Downing, 1970; Francis, 1973; Meltzer and Herse, 1969; Mickish, 1974; Reid, 1966; Rozin et al., 1974). These questions were created by the author and often followed-up with a "Why?" or "What are they for?". Thus a well-rounded "concept" for each term was elicited from each subject (S). This open-ended technique of questioning was suggested to the author by Reid's (1966) research, though the phrasing of questions in the RCRQ was unique to this study.

The fourteen questions of section III developed from concerns expressed in several earlier studies (Edwards, 1961; McConkie and Nixon, 1959; Stewart, 1966). The next seventeen questions of section IV were stimulated by the research of McConkie and Nixon (1959), Reid (1966), Mason (1967) and Tovey (1976). The five questions of section V were created by this author. Ideas for eight questions of the last section were stimulated by the research of several studies (Denny and Weintraub, 1965, 1966; Downing, 1970; Edwards, 1961; Johns, 1974; Mason, 1967; McConkie and Nixon, 1959; Stewart, 1966).

The sections were arranged to provide occasional periods with a concrete object (a book). Questions in sections I and II required the Ss to look at something in the book. Those in sections III and IV did not utilize a book. Questions for section V used a book again and questions in section VI did not. Section VI was placed at the end because the author thought that such young Ss would answer these questions more completely after a discussion of many aspects of reading.

Within each section the questions were arranged to lead as smoothly as possible from one conceptual area to another.

Preceding the RCRQ, "warm-up" questions were devised to set the subject at ease and introduce the question-answer format. These questions consisted of general information gathering, name, age, school, favorite color, etc. (See Appendix A.)

Canadian Test of Basic Skills (1974)

The Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) was chosen to obtain a standardized achievement rating for each subject in reading comprehension (see research questions five and seven). Sections R1, R2, and R3 of the primary battery, level seven, must all be given to obtain a reading comprehension score. Sections R1, R2, and R3 respectively measured picture comprehension, sentence comprehension, and story comprehension. These were administered to the Ss in groups of less than or equal to 10 Ss. These three scores were added and the resulting total score was converted to a grade equivalent level by means of a table. The CTBS was selected because it was the author's conviction that a reading achievement test should include inferential as well as literal questions when assessing comprehension, 44 of 66 questions in this batter required inferential answers. The results of this test are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1 shows that the LE-group and the E-group had a spread of 2.8 grade levels amongst their scores. The P-group had a spread of 4.0 grade levels unless S6 is eliminated in which case the spread is reduced to 1.1 grade levels. The P-group contained more Ss who scored below a 1.0 grade level than did the E-group or LE-group. The P-group also contained the S who attained the highest overall score. However the E-group and LE-group each had more Ss whose scores were higher than the 2.5 grade level, 5 Ss and 4 Ss respectively.

Figure 1 demonstrates that the distribution of scores for this group of Ss after nine months of school was skewed to the left (i.e., toward the lower scores). Yet 29 Ss, nearly half the sample, were reading at or above their grade level (greater than or equal to 1.9). However, because all students at the extreme ends were retained, forming a less homogeneous group, the findings of the study were consequently limited and must be interpreted with caution.

The population used for standardization of the CTBS was Canadian schools containing a grade-three class in which English was the language of instruction (CTBS, 1976). The sample size for each grade level was 4,500. Each sample was selected so there was a distribution of pupils across provinces "in the same proportion as the distribution of English-speaking children zero to four years old, as reported in the 1961 census" (CTBS, 1976, p. 56). To standardize the Primary Battery, a subsample of 1,500 children in each of grades one and two was used. The schools from which these children were selected included Catholic as well as non-Catholic schools.

In order to accurately represent the proportions of English-

Table 1

CTBS Results*
Rank Order per Group

Language Experience		Phonic		Eclectic	
S #	Grade Score	S #	Grade Score	S #	Grade Score
26	1.0	1	0.4	38	0.6
40	1.2	3	0.5	51	1.2
41	1.3	7	0.8	32	1.2
28	1.4	13	0.9	45	1.2
25	1.4	59	1.2	33	1.2
30	1.4	9	1.2	48	1.4
42	1.4	4	1.4	52	1.6
29	1.5	11	1.4	50	1.7
21	1.5	2	1.7	47	1.8
17	1.6	57	1.8	35	1.9
27	1.7	56	1.9	36	1.9
24	1.7	8	1.9	34	2.1
19	1.9	14	2.1	54	2.2
22	2.0	58	2.2	39	2.3
15	2.2	60	2.3	37	2.5
43	2.5	61	2.4	55	2.6
18	2.7	5	2.4	53	2.6
20	2.9	10	2.5	49	2.8
23	3.7	12	2.5	31	3.2
16	3.8	6	4.4	46	3.4

* Canadian Test of Basic Skills, Level 7, Form 3M, 1976.

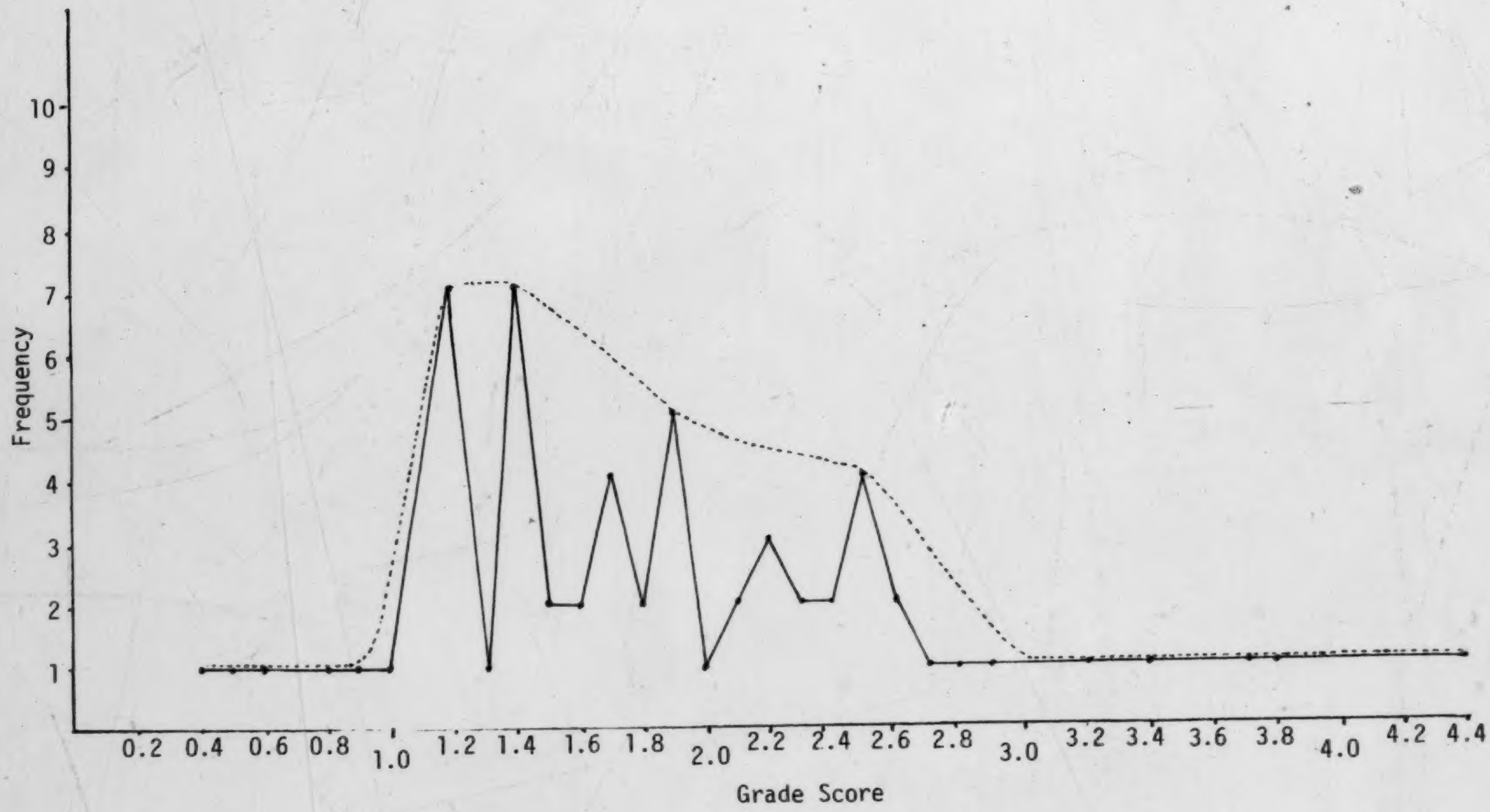

Figure 1

Frequency by Grade Score
(For the Whole Group)

speaking children per province, "the frequencies in the distribution of raw scores for each school" (CTBS, 1976, p. 57) were weighted. That is, these frequencies were each multiplied by a single-digit weight to achieve a representative pupil sample.

The weighted scores were scaled to establish comparable grade-equivalent scores across all levels of the CTBS. From this a growth model was established to insure a "continuity of the measurement of progress beginning in grade one and continuing through grade eight" (CTBS, 1976, p. 58).

The authors of this test purport that "validity must be judged in relation to purpose" (CTBS, 1976, p. 58). So stating, a list of purposes for the origination of the test is given. Thus, if a user's purpose is consistent with those of the test authors, the user could conclude that he was using a valid instrument. In the present study, this test was used to determine the developmental level of each S in reading comprehension. In this author's opinion, such a purpose is consistent with those of the test authors.

Reliability for the individual subtests was computed through the use of Kuder-Richardson Formula 20. The reliability coefficient for the reading subtest used in this study was .91

Procedure

The procedure followed in this study involved four steps. After the survey questionnaire was constructed, the interview conditions were planned. Then, the RCRQ was piloted, revisions were made, and the data for the main study were collected. Each of these four steps is discussed below.

Interview

The interviews were conducted in private rooms within each school. The following equipment was present for each interview: large desk, two chairs, cassette tapes, cassette tape recorder, My Yellow Book (Longmans, n.d.), Sounds of the Storyteller (Martin, 1966), and the RCRQ protocol sheets. All interviews were tape recorded. The two books mentioned were selected because they were judged to be sufficiently unfamiliar to the subjects receiving the RCRQ by the author, after consultation with both teachers and children.

The interviewer escorted each subject to the interview room talking with the subject en route. The chairs were placed side-by-side to facilitate manipulating the books used during the interview. The directions were read for the warm-up questions, the tape recorder was turned on, and the interview began with the interviewer recording the responses dictated. After question #5 in the warm-up, the interviewer said "Would you like to see what I'm writing down?" Then the interviewer showed the subject what she had written, rereading each question and the responses given. This was done to allay any fears the subjects might have had regarding the interview. After the warm-up, the interviewer said, "Now, I'm going to ask you some questions about reading." The RCRQ followed. Preceding question #5 on the RCRQ, the interviewer assured each subject that he/she did not need to read out loud; the interviewer said, "You don't have to read anything for me, we're just going to talk about reading." At this point, the interviewer introduced My Yellow Book to the S and the RCRQ began. Pages two through five of the first story in My Yellow Book and page 47 in Sounds of a

Storyteller were used.

At the conclusion, question 67, the interviewer played back a portion of the subject's interview, thus allowing each subject to hear themselves on the tape and also making sure the "record" button had been "on" during the interview. This check was performed at the conclusion of the interview to insure that the flow of conversation during the interview was not interrupted. The interviewer was fully aware of the risk involved in this procedure, and realized that if the tape did not record, a new S would have been selected.

All children received the questions in the same order, with few exceptions. Occasionally a response to a later question indicated that a subject actually might have been aware of a correct answer to a previous question. For example, S 57 answered "letters and words" when asked to identify words. Yet when explaining the function of spaces, S 57 talked about keeping the words apart. Hence the interviewer repeated the previous question to elicit the correct response. Often this helped the subject, though this procedure was only necessary on three occasions. In these situations, the only additional aid offered was a mere repetition of a previous question. The interviewer was careful not to stress any word unduly during this repetition. In addition there were many why- or why not- questions following yes/no questions. Each subject received the appropriate form of the why-question. If a S's response was vague or seemed incomplete to the interviewer, it was either rephrased or "followed-up" with additional questions to pursue the S's thinking, or clarify the S's response. (See Appendix B for two sample interviews.)

After the interviews were completed, the author listened to each tape to check the initial recording of responses and write down the more elaborate extended questions or responses.

The Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted prior to the main study to determine if the RCRQ would elicit responses from grade-one children. It was conducted at a fourth Catholic school in Edmonton. Twelve children were selected from two grade-one classes; they were chosen by their teachers as representative of a cross-section of reading achievement abilities in the class.

The procedure already outlined was followed for the pilot study. Results of the pilot study showed that the Ss were able to respond to the questionnaire with little difficulty and appeared to answer honestly with a variety of responses. The procedure used ran smoothly and the Ss seemed at ease during the interviews. The duration of each interview averaged about 20 minutes. After completing the pilot study, the following changes in the RCRQ were deemed worthwhile:

Q10[2]: "What is this called?" (Interviewer blocks off a whole sentence with two pieces of paper and points to it.)

This question was revised to say, "What is this whole thing called?" When the author did not specify that the entire "sentence" was under scrutiny, the subjects often responded with "words."

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[2] The number designations Q10, Q15, etc. were made to correspond to the coding used for analysis, not to the exact number on the RCRQ sheet.

Q15: "Would this word say 'toy'?" (Interviewer pointed to the word "boy.")

If it was obvious that the S could not read the word "boy," after the question was asked and followed up by "why?", the author read the word and then repeated the question. In this way knowledge of sound/symbol correspondence was assessed without the requirement of reading.

Q28: "Why does the teacher ask questions?"

"When you read" was added to Q28 so Ss would know the focus was on questioning in reading lessons rather than in mathematics or other subjects.

Q45: "Do you talk when you read?"

The word "talk" was changed to "speak." In addition, if a S responded "yes" to "Do you have to speak when you read?" the question was followed up with "why?" plus "How else can you read?" Thus the author could check a S's recognition of reading as a silent process.

Q40: "Do they read the same as you?"

This question was revised to "Do they read the same way as you do?" This revision seemed to lead Ss away from less relevant comments like, "Yes, they read the same language."

Q55: Interviewer points to "by Ed Renfro" (p. 45, Sounds of the Storyteller) and asks, "What does this tell you?"

Originally this question followed Q60. It was decided to place this question before Q57 so the Ss would be in the correct frame of reference to answer Q57 to Q60.

Q65: "Why do people read?"

This question was expanded because Ss asked "Do you mean at school?" The following three questions evolved: "Why do you read at school? Why do you read at home? Why do you think other people read?" (If Ss did not respond to the last one they were asked, "Why do you think other adults read?")

Main Study

The same procedure was followed using the revised questions on the RCRQ and using page 47 in the Sounds of the Storyteller. As the interviews for each group were completed, the Ss were given subtests R2, R3, and R1 of the CTBS in that order. These group tests were administered in isolated classrooms with 10 to 20 Ss, following the instructions in the manual. Subtests R2 and R3 were more difficult, therefore, they were given first. The subtests were untimed; while supervising, the interviewer did not note any signs of fatigue from the children. The CTBS administration averaged 50 minutes in duration.

The tests were scored and the Ss were rank-ordered within groups. A list was compiled for each group displaying each S's subtest score and final comprehension grade equivalent. These lists were sent with thank you letters to the respective teachers. (See Appendix C for samples.)

Data were collected from 61 Ss. S 14 from the P-group was replaced because he was unable to answer questions on the RCRQ and unable to read anything or understand how to take the CTBS. S 41 was omitted because 21 Ss from group two were accidently interviewed.

Categorizing the Data

Coding

After all responses were recorded on the RCRQ protocol sheets and rechecked with the tapes, responses to each question were nominally classified. The author kept a running tally of response types as interviews were completed during the pilot study. These responses were grouped into discrete classes on the basis of what Ss reported; responses were not hierarchically or otherwise assigned any value. These classes were assigned a number for data processing. The classification of responses to target questions is reported below.

The category numbers are not in strict sequence; they correspond to the data card code. For example, Q4, below, has four category "code numbers" being "1, 2, 8, and 9," rather than "1, 2, 3, and 4." "8" and "9" were used constantly to represent "other" and "I don't know" which allowed for the generation of seven unique categories per question, if needed.

Q4: "What parts do you read?"

1. words
2. pictures
8. other
9. I don't know (DK)

Q6: "What are these called."

1. words
2. words and letters
3. letters
4. reading
5. names of individual letters
8. other
9. DK

Q7: "What are they (letters) for?"

1. to read/reading
2. read them
3. for books
4. to learn to read
8. other
9. DK

Q8: "What are these called?" (spaces)

1. spaces
2. nothing
3. middles
4. blanks
5. ends
8. other
9. DK

Q9: "What are they (spaces) for?"

1. separate words
2. so you don't get the words all mixed up
3. so you don't get the words stuck together
4. so the letters don't get too close
5. easier to read
8. other
9. DK

Q10: "What is this whole thing called?" (sentence)

1. sentence
2. words
3. line
4. reading
5. letters
8. other
9. DK

Q11: "What is it (sentence) for?"

1. to read
2. to know what the story's about
8. other
9. DK

Q12: "What is this (word) made of?"

1. tool used to make letters, felt, pencil, etc.
2. alphabet
3. names of individual letters
4. letters
5. words
8. other
9. DK

Q13: "What are these called." (letters)

1. letters
2. words
3. names of letters
4. alphabets
7. didn't get the question
9. DK

Q14: "What are they for?" (letters)

1. to make words
2. spelling
3. reading
4. to sound out
8. other
9. DK

Q15: "Would this word say 'toy'?"

1. yes
2. no
8. other
9. DK

Q16: "Why?"

2. if you changed the "b" to "t"
3. if you put a "t" in front of it
7. didn't get the question
8. other
9. DK

Q17: "Why not?"

1. because it has a "b" in front
2. there is no "t" in front
3. because it would have to have a "t" at the start
7. didn't get the question
8. other
9. DK

Q27: "What does a good reader have to know?"

1. how to read
2. know the words
3. know letters
4. sound out words
5. read well
8. other
9. DK

Q28: "When you read why does the teacher ask questions?"

1. comprehension
2. so you can learn to read, get better
3. so you know words
4. so you know the answer
5. so we get our work right
6. to check how good you are in reading
8. other
9. DK

Q29: "Should you answer all the questions?"

1. yes
2. no
8. other
9. DK

Q30: "Why?"

1. get in trouble if you don't
2. to be polite or obedient
3. so you know words
4. comprehension: know story and to remember the story
5. to learn
6. to check if you're listening
7. didn't get the question
8. other
9. DK

Q31: "Why not?"

1. because you know the words by yourself
7. did not get the question
8. other
9. DK

Q45: "Do you have to speak when you read?"

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes
8. other
9. DK

Q46: "Why?"

1. so people hear you
2. because you're reading
3. so the teacher knows you are reading
4. so you can sound out better
7. did not get the question
8. other
9. DK

Q47: "How else can you read?"

1. in your mind
2. just looking } added from main study
3. don't say anything
4. read to myself/yourself
5. read quietly
7. did not get the question
8. other
9. DK

Q55: "What does this (by . . .) tell you?"

1. what the story is about
2. who wrote the book/story
3. beginning
4. about the pictures
5. a word
8. other
9. DK

Q56: When author was pronounced and Q55 repeated

1. who wrote book/story
2. what the story is about
7. did not get the question
8. other
9. DK

Q65: "Why do you read in school?"

1. you need to know/so you learn to read
2. to learn (general)
3. for teacher approval
4. for the next grade
5. you have to
6. to know words
8. other
9. DK

Q66: "Why do you read at home?"

1. parent approval
2. fun/like to
3. practice
4. to know words
5. I don't
6. to learn (generally)
8. other
9. DK

Q67: "Why do other people read?"

1. to learn to read
2. fun/like to
3. practice
4. to learn (generally)
5. to know words
6. to teach others
7. for information
8. other
9. DK

(Appendix D contains the classification scheme for each question on the entire survey.)

Each S's data were then coded onto IBM data card sheets for keypunching and further analysis. The following information was coded for each S: identifying number, group number, comprehension grade score, the type of response given to each of the 67 questions, and the coder.

Validity and Reliability of RCRQ

In this section, content validity, inter-rater reliability and test-retest reliability are discussed.

Content Validity

Content validity (Collins, Johansen and Johnson, 1969, p. 30) is concerned with the relationship between the test items (in this study, the interview questions) and the purpose of the test. The purpose of the interview in the present study was to collect children's comments regarding specific concepts involved in learning to read. The pilot study confirmed that the questionnaire (RCRQ) used by the author did elicit comments from the Ss regarding their concepts of the purpose(s) for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language.

Inter-rater Reliability

After all answers of the Ss were coded by the author, eight Ss were randomly selected using a table of random digits (Hays and Winkler, 1971). These Ss were assigned to two impartial judges, one a graduate student in organic chemistry, the other a college English teacher. The judges were given the category codes for each question and asked to code the responses for the eight Ss. This information was then key-punched onto data cards as previously described for each S.

To facilitate analysis of inter-rater reliability, the computer was programmed to reorganize the data for these eight Ss by rater. Thus all the responses which coder one assigned were listed, then coder two, then coder three. Thus, the data were now read by coder rather than by S; in this way comparisons between raters one and two, raters one and three, and raters two and three were carried out. The Binomial Test was applied for each of these comparisons to determine if the proportion of disagreements between the raters was significantly less than .05. The results demonstrated that there were no significant differences ($p < .05$) among the three judges.

Test-Retest Reliability

One month after the collection of data for the main study, 20 Ss were randomly selected using a table of random digits (Hays and Winkler, 1971). These Ss were interviewed again using the same procedure outlined above, except that pages two to five of the second story in My Yellow Book and page 130 in Sounds of the Storyteller were used. The responses were coded in the same manner described above.

Again, a program was designed to reorganize the data by original response and retest response for the 20 Ss. Then the 68 questions were matched for the percentages of disagreements. The Binomial Test was used to determine if the percentage of disagreements was significantly less than .10. The results did not approach significance indicating that the Ss' retest responses were very different from their original responses. Results of this analysis showed a 62% agreement rate for the 20 Ss.

The author noted the low rate of consistency which the retested Ss demonstrated and duly considered this outcome. It is the author's opinion that these Ss were honestly reflecting their views and given their young ages perhaps no greater consistency could be expected. It was also considered that these varying responses on different occasions emphasized the Ss' lack of certainty regarding the concepts discussed during the interview. Chapter 4 will show that a majority of Ss did not appear to hold clear ideas about many concepts of written language explored by the target questions. In a state of confusion, different answers may have seemed synonymous to the Ss. Further consideration was given to the fact that no other researchers in this area have reported test-retest reliabilities for interview data, yet the findings were considered acceptable. Suggestions pertinent to this fact will be made in Chapter 5.

As a result of these considerations, the lack of test-retest reliability was reported and the author decided that the information obtained from these Ss warranted the further analyses of data collected in the study.

Method of Analysis

After coding, the data for each S was keypunched onto IBM data cards. An Amdol 470 V6 computer was used for all analyses. The operating system employed was the Michegen Terminal System. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences program was used and the following procedures were run: frequencies, crosstabulations, and Binomial Test.

After frequencies were calculated for each class of response to each question on the RCRQ, some recombining occurred. If a class response was made by less than 5% of the Ss, that class was recombined with a superordinate class (qualitatively a subset of another class) or placed into the miscellaneous group. The author arbitrarily assigned the 5% level as the cut-off for constituting a discrete class. If two classes were deemed qualitatively equal, at this point, they were amalgamated (i.e., "don't say nothing" and "read quietly").

Then specific interview questions relevant to the research questions three, four, five, six and seven were crosstabulated to identify significant relationships. The level of significance was set at $p < .05$ and significant relationships were evaluated by the chi-square statistic. (To facilitate crosstabulations with the comprehension grade-level scores, these scores were recoded into low, average, and high.) The data collected were nominal, and comparisons could only be made between quantities of responses per category. The x^2 statistic is founded upon such frequency information, therefore, it was the logical choice for evaluating the significance of relationships.

Summary

Three groups of grade-one children were identified by the central office personnel of the Edmonton Catholic School Board; the criterion for identification was method of reading instruction: phonic, language experience, and eclectic. Sixty children were selected by their teachers and were interviewed individually by the author. (A pilot study was first conducted to test the questionnaire used, RCRQ.) The purpose of the interview was to elicit verbalizations from these 60 Ss regarding their purposes for reading and concepts of selected components of written language. In addition, all Ss were administered the reading comprehension sections of the CTBS. Responses relevant to research questions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were categorized and subjected to analysis by crosstabulation to identify any significant relationships (see research questions).

Chapter 4

THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This chapter contains a report of the findings of the present study by each research question noted in Chapter 1. To collect the information sought by research questions one and two, it was often necessary to ask additional "lead-in" or "follow-up" questions. These questions and their answers are reported here. In presenting these findings, first a description of the questions asked is given, secondly, a description of the response categories is reported, and lastly, the statistical data are noted. For research questions three to seven, a report is given concerning the significance of relationships explored. Immediately following the presentation of results for each research question is a discussion of those results.

Research Question One

Research question one asked, "What do grade-one children verbalize about the purpose for reading?" This question was broken down and expanded into three questions as a result of the pilot study: (1) "Why do you read in school?" (Q65), (2) "Why do you read at home?" (Q66), and (3) "Why do other people read?" (Q67). The responses to each question are described below.

Why do you read in school? (Q65)

Table 2 shows the absolute frequencies and percentages of subjects' (Ss) responses per category. The largest percentage of

Table 2

Purpose for Reading

	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
Purpose for Reading in School (Q65)[a]		
- to learn how to read	16	27
- to learn (in general)	7	12
- for teacher approval	8	13
- I have to	5	8
- to know words	8	13
- other	10	17
- I don't know	6	10
Total	60	100
Purpose for Reading at Home (Q66)		
- parent approval	4	7
- enjoyment	12	20
- practice	9	15
- to know words	9	15
- I don't (read at home)	4	7
- to learn (in general)	3	5
- other	14	23
- I don't know	5	8
Total	60	100
Purpose for Reading in General (Q67)		
- to learn to read	6	10
- enjoyment	17	28
- practice	2	3
- to learn (in general)	11	18
- to know words	4	7
- other	8	13
- I don't know	12	20
Total	60	100

[a] The "Q" numbers refer to the code used for computer analysis (see Chapter 3).

responses, 27%, fell in the first category "to learn how to read." The smallest amount of responses, 8%, were found in the category "I have to." The "other" responses, 17%, represented a diversity which did not fit easily into any other categories (e.g., "so you can read in our school" and "because there's nowhere else to read").

Why do you read at home? (Q66)

The distribution of responses per category are located in Table 2. The largest percentage of responses, 23%, fell in the "other" category. Again the responses of this group contained considerable diversity (e.g., "Mom tells me to," "more best," "cause I have books that are easy to read," etc.). However, there was a substantial concentration of responses in three other categories: 20% in "enjoyment," 15% in "practice," and 15% in "to know words." The smallest number of responses, 5%, were found in the category "to learn in general."

Why do other people read? (Q67)

These results are also listed in Table 2. The category "enjoyment" contained 28% of the responses. Other concentrations of responses were found in the categories "to learn in general," 18%, and "I don't know," 20%. The smallest group of responses, 3%, was found in the class "to know words." Some examples of "other" responses were: "to be smart" and "it's good for you."

Comparative Observations

When the purpose question directly related to "school," 27% of the Ss' responses fell into the "other" and the "I don't know" categories. When the question posed did not directly relate to "school," the combined percentages of these categories increased, 31% for Q66 and 33% for Q67. Furthermore, when the purpose question directly mentioned "school," 27% of the responses fell into the category "to learn how to read." When the questions omitted reference to the word "school," the percentages in this category decreased, 0% for Q66 and 10% for Q67.

Discussion

In comparing the three questions which assessed the Ss' concepts of the purposes for reading, one prominent difference appeared. When asked, "Why do you read in school?", no Ss responded "for enjoyment." Yet, when asked about reading in a different context, at home or with regard to other people, 20% and 28% of the responses fell in this category. These results suggest that the Ss perceived the role of the school to be the place where the skill of reading was acquired with the process of learning divorced from enjoyment.

When asked "Why do you read at home?", it is noteworthy that 20% responded "for enjoyment." It is also noteworthy that 30% of the responses indicated a concern for practice (if one interprets learning more words as a type of practice).

As the question was further removed from the child personally, this "practice" function diminished (30% to 10%). It is encouraging to note that 28% of the Ss' responses fell in the "enjoyment" category when asked "why do other people read?" An additional 18% of those responses fell into the "general learning" category representing an increase from the previous two questions. It appeared that some of these young Ss understood that, at their present age, they read to learn how. Yet, they still appeared to understand that "other people" read for different reasons because they already knew how (to read). Consequently, 46% of the Ss interviewed appeared to realize that reading could serve a useful purpose (28% enjoyment and 18% general learning).

However, in response to each of these three purpose questions, a minimum of 27% of the Ss could offer no sound reason for reading. This finding was achieved by summing the percentages of the "other" and "I don't know" categories for each purpose question. The wide variety of responses in these groups contained very little or no indication of the usefulness of reading. These results support a similar finding by Denny and Weintraub (1966); they concluded that 25% of their grade-one Ss could express no logical reason for learning to read.

Research Question Two

Research question two asked, "What do grade-one children verbalize about selected components of written language?" Responses about each component are described and discussed separately, and are also reported in Tables 3 through 8.

2.1 Which symbols should be read? (Q4)

My Yellow Book was opened to page two on which words and pictures were displayed, then the interviewer said, "Which parts do you read? Point to the parts you read?" Ninety-five percent of the Ss pointed to the "words" and 5% pointed to the "pictures." It is

Table 3

Identification and Purpose of Words, Spaces and Sentences

	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
Which symbols are read? (Q4)		
- words	57	95
- pictures	3	5
Total	60	100
What do grade one children call words? (Q6)		
- words	49	82
- letters	4	7
- other	4	7
- I don't know	3	5
Total	60	100
What function do words perform? (Q7)		
- to read/reading	56	93
- other	4	7
What do grade one children call spaces? (Q8)		
- spaces	28	47
- middles	5	8
- other	11	18
- I don't know	16	27
Total	60	100
What function do they perform? (Q9)		
- separate words	9	15
- don't get words all mixed up	7	12
- don't get words all stuck together	16	27
- so letters don't get too close	3	5
- other	17	28
- I don't know	8	13
Total	60	100
What do grade one children call sentences? (Q10)		
- sentence	12	20
- word	25	42
- other	8	13
- I don't know	15	25
Total	60	100
What function does it perform? (Q11)		
- to read	44	73
- other	8	13
- I don't know	8	13
Total	60	100

noteworthy that virtually all of these Ss responded the same way.

The results of this question showed that practically all the Ss realized that printed words rather than pictures were the symbols one learned to read. At least by the eighth month of grade one, virtually all the students in this sample had formed a strong association between reading and words.

2.2 What do grade-one children call "words" and what function do words perform? (Q6, 7)

During the interview, all the words on page two of My Yellow Book were pointed to with a pen. Simultaneously, the interviewer asked, "What are these called?" (Q6). Eighty-two percent of the Ss' responses fell in the "words" category demonstrating that the majority of Ss responded the same way. Responses classified as "other," 7%, included the following: "printing," "reading," and the naming of individual letters.

In reply to "What are they for?" (Q7), 93% of the Ss said, "to read" or "for reading." The "other" category included such replies as "for books" and "for children and teachers."

These results showed that after eight months of formal reading instruction, 82% of the Ss could correctly label words. Previous researchers (Holden and MacGinitie, 1972; Rozin et al., 1974), though using different tasks, concluded that grade-one and kindergarten Ss were quite unaware of the printing convention. The results of this research demonstrate that a much larger percentage of grade-one Ss are indeed quite aware of the printing convention, 82% compared to 43% (Rozin et al., 1974) and 82% compared with virtually none (Holden and MacGinitie, 1972). Perhaps the nature of the task (being asked to identify words from a book) used in the present research permitted the Ss to relate more easily to the question. The task was not foreign and fit in quite naturally with school experiences.

When asked what words were for, 93% of the Ss responded quickly, "reading" (as if the interviewer were rather dull). There was no spontaneous link to oral language and no hint of recognition that written words might represent speaking. This finding is consistent with that of Reid (1966), Downing (1970), and Francis (1973).

2.3 What function do grade-one children think "spaces" perform? (Q8, 9)

When Ss were asked "What are these (spaces)?" (Q8), almost half, 47%, gave the correct word label, "spaces." However, 45% of the responses were categorized as "other" indicating that nearly an equal percentage of Ss were unable to give the correct word label. Some examples of these "other" responses were: "nothing," "ends," "blanks," "paper," etc. Thus, the students in this sample either knew the correct term, spaces, or they did not know it. Yet, even those who did not use the correct term, did indicate an absence of words in their answers.

Responses regarding the function spaces perform (Q9) were more diverse. The largest percentage of responses fell in the "other" category, 28%. This category included such replies as "read it easier," "when you read a word you jump on to the next one," and "for saying it clear." Substantial percentages were noted in the categories, "don't get all the words stuck together," 27%, and "separate words," 15%. The smallest amount of responses, 5%, were located in the category, "so the letters don't get too close."

Thus, 47% of the Ss correctly labeled "spaces" and 58% were able to verbalize an adequate reason for their use upon a page of print. It seems reasonable, in this author's opinion, to expect young children to know what something does before they realize and consistently attach the correct label to it. This finding also seems consistent with current teacher-educator methods that having children understand the process is more important than using precise labels.

Previous studies (Meltzer and Herse, 1969; Mickish, 1974) used different tasks involving one sentence either correctly or incorrectly spaced. These researchers noted that those grade-one Ss reading at the higher classroom-group levels were able to recognize the function of spaces. However, these studies did not report what percentages of their entire samples realized this function. Results of the present study, reported on page 105, will show no statistically significant relationship between comprehension level and awareness of the function spaces perform.

2.4 What do grade-one children call a "sentence" and what function does it perform? (Q10, 11)

The largest percentage of answers, 42%, were found in the category "words" though substantial percentages existed for the categories "I don't know," 25%, and "sentence," 20%. Examples of answers in the "other" category, 13%, were: "line," "letters," "reading," "parts of words." Thus, only 20% of the Ss could correctly label a "sentence."

The summation of the last two categories, "other" and "I don't know" indicated that 38% of the Ss were unfamiliar with "sentences" as a unit. The finding that 42% of these Ss identified such units as "words" instead, supports the research of Francis (1973) who concluded that children under the age of seven often confused the concepts of sentence and words.

When asked what purpose a sentence had, little difference was noted in Ss' responses. The largest percentage of responses fell into the category "to read," 73%. Some examples of the "other" responses, 13%, were: "you can put anything that you want," "story," "if there's not an end, it doesn't sound right," and "to print in reading." Francis (1973) would most likely have categorized the response "to read" as "undiscriminating." Most Ss in this study, 93%, thought that words were for "reading" also, another "undiscriminating" response. The findings here support those of Francis when she concluded that young children's responses regarding the purposes for letters are more discriminating than those purposes given for words or sentences. In these two studies, grade-one children seemed to recognize only that "words" are necessary to do this "thing" that teachers tell them is called reading. Again, no association was made of written "sentences" with spoken language.

2.5 Of what do grade-one children think words are composed and what function do letters perform? (Q12, 13, 14)

Two specific questions were designed to elicit children's responses to this target question: (1) What are these (the interviewer pointed to words) made of? (Q12) and (2) What are these (the interviewer pointed to letters) called? (Q13). If subjects appeared to miscomprehend the direction of the first alternative (Q12), the second variation was asked (Q13).

Results of these two questions are shown in Table 4. Most of the subjects who responded that the words were made of "ink," "felt," "pencil," etc., were administered the variation of the question, Q13, and their responses in the "other" category vanished. It should be noted here that four Ss who should have received the Q13 variation were inadvertently omitted. It is noteworthy that the number of responses in the category "I don't know" were reduced also.

On the two questions, Q12 and Q13, the largest percentages of responses were in the category "letters," 23% and 35% respectively, although 23% of the Ss responded "words" in Q13. In answer to both questions, the smallest percentages of responses fell in the category letter names, 3% and 7%. It is noteworthy that the percentage of "I don't know" responses decreased with the Q13 variation, 13% to 5%. Therefore, more than half the Ss, 35 Ss, could correctly label a "letter" though 14 Ss still confused letters and words.

When asked about the function of letters, Q14, 55% responded "for reading" or "to read." A smaller percentage, 22%, responded "to make words" and fewer still, 12%, replied "spelling." "Other" responses composed 8% of the replies and included such remarks as "to sound out."

In the terms of Francis (1973), most of the Ss' replies were still "undiscriminating" (e.g., "reading"). However, 33% of the replies were "discriminating" (e.g., "making words" and "spelling"). The results of the present study are consistent with the findings of Francis (1973).

Table 4

Identification and Purpose of Letters

	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
What do grade-one children call letters? (Q12) [What is this (word) made of?]		
- tool or substance used to print letters	26	43
- alphabets	4	7
- letter names	2	3
- letters	14	23
- words	2	3
- other	4	7
- I don't know	8	13
Total	60	100
What are these (letters) called? (Q13)		
- letters	21	35
- words	14	23
- names individual letters	4	7
- I don't know	3	5
- didn't receive the Q.	18	30
Total	60	100
What function do they perform? (Q14)		
- to make words	13	22
- spelling	7	12
- reading	33	55
- other	5	8
- I don't know	2	3
Total	60	100

2.6 Are grade-one children aware of sound-symbol association? (Q15, 16, 17)

To assess this concept, a series of three questions was asked. First, the interviewer pointed to the word "boy" on page four of My Yellow Book saying "Would this word say 'toy'?" (Q15). Two probing questions followed naturally: "Why?" (Q16) if the S responded "yes" and "Why not?" (Q17) if the S responded "no." These results are reported in Table 5.

Table 5

Sound-Symbol Association

	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
Would this word say 'toy'? (Q15)		
- yes	6	10
- no	54	90
Total	60	100
Why? (Q16)		
- if you change the "b" to a "t"	4	7
- other	2	3
Total	6	10
Why not? (Q17)		
- because it would have to have a "t" at the beginning	47	78
- other	6	10
- I don't know	1	2
Total	54	90

Ninety percent of the Ss responded "no" to the first question. When asked "why?", most respondents, 7%, indicated that the beginning letter would have to be changed. When asked "why not?" most Ss, 78%, indicated that the beginning was "b" not "t." Responses classified as "other," 10%, were those such as, "because it has a 'b' starting," "because it's got a 'b' in the front." These were placed as "other" because the Ss did not mention any awareness that a "t" would be necessary for the word to say "toy."

Results of Q15 indicated that 90% of the Ss had a global understanding that "boy" did not say "toy." Of these, 85% demonstrated that they knew a "t" needed to replace the "b" if the word were to say "toy" (4 Ss in Q16 plus 47 Ss in Q17). However, this result could stem from at least one of two reasons. Either (1) "boy" and "toy" were so firmly established in the sight-word reading vocabulary of the Ss that they merely recognized the word "boy" and remembered what "toy" would look like or (2) the Ss actually thought the beginning sound would have to be "tuh" to make "toy" which means the letter "t" would be needed. Unfortunately, the interview question used did not discriminate between these two reasons. Perhaps an additional question such as the following would have yielded more information: "How would a 't' make it say 'toy'?"

2.7 Do grade-one children recognize that the author is the one who wrote the story? (Q55)

To assess this concept, the interviewer opened Sounds of the Storyteller to page 47. On this page the title, author, and illustrator of a story are printed in addition to a picture and first paragraph of the story. The interviewer pointed to the phrase "by Leo Israel" and asked, "What does this tell you?" (Q55). The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Recognition of the Author

	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
Do grade-one children recognize the author? (Q55) [What does this (by . . .) tell you?]		
- what the story is about	12	20
- who wrote the book/story	12	20
- beginning of the story	8	13
- other	10	17
- I don't know	18	30
Total	60	100
Same question reading phrase aloud		
- who wrote book/story	6	10
- what story's about	1	2
- other	7	12
- I don't know	27	45
Total	41	69

The largest percentage of responses, 30%, fell in the "I don't know" category. By combining the second and third categories, it was noted that 33% of the Ss replied that the author's name was an integral part of the story. A small percentage of Ss, 20%, responded that the phrase indicated "who wrote the book or story." Typical responses in the "other" category, 17%, were, "to read," "to play on the playground," "to watch out if the ball hits the window," "to read about the story," "about the pictures," "a word," etc.

Due to the large number of mistaken responses to this question, the interviewer read aloud the phrase, "by Leo Israel," for 41 Ss, and repeated the question. Reading the phrase aloud permitted 6 more Ss to recognize the author. However, 27 Ss compared to 18 Ss before, now responded "I don't know." "Other" responses were similar to those mentioned above, and only 1 S thought the author's name was an integral part of the story.

Only 18 Ss knew that "by . . ." referred to someone who wrote the story. Perhaps this lack of "author recognition" stems from the overuse of basal readers which do not note an author for each story they contain.

2.8 Are grade-one children aware that reading can be a silent process? (Q44, 45, 46, 47)

This concept was also assessed by a series of questions. First, Ss were asked, "Do you speak when you read?" (Q44). Then the interviewer asked the Ss, "Do you have to speak when you read?" (Q45). If the S replied "yes," he/she was asked "Why?" (Q46), then asked "How else can you read?" (Q47). If the S replied "no" to Q45, he/she was asked only Q47. Thus, even if the *Ss* answered from a specific personal frame of reference, "Yes, *I* always have to speak when I read," they were given a chance to show that they were aware of another way to read. The results are shown in Table 7.

In response to Q44, 85% of the *Ss* replied "yes" they spoke when they read. In response to Q45, most *Ss*, 55%, still replied "yes" but 42% now replied "no." Inadvertently only 23 of the 33 *Ss* who replied "yes" were asked "Why?" (Q46). The majority of *Ss* responding to Q46 replied "so people can hear you" (14 *Ss*). Of those who answered Q45 with "no," all were asked Q47. Most of the responses fell into two categories, 14 *Ss* replied "in your mind" and 10 *Ss* replied "to yourself." When considering all four of these questions, very few responses (less than 4 *Ss* in any one question) were categorized as "other."

Though 85% of these *Ss* admitted that they *did* speak when reading, only 55% proclaimed that they *had* to and 42% agreed that speaking was not necessary. Of the 38 *Ss* who did receive Q47, 30 *Ss* indicated an awareness of reading as a silent process. These results did not support the findings of Tovey (1976) who found that only 6 elementary *Ss* of a total 30 *Ss* were aware of silent reading and none of these were in grades one or two. He concluded that children perceived reading as an oral process. The present study showed that if young children are not assigned a school-type task (e.g., read a paragraph) then nearly half of the *Ss* used could show their awareness that reading could be accomplished either orally or silently. Furthermore, these *Ss* could also verbalize the method employed when reading silently.

Table 7

Recognition of Silent Reading

	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
Are grade-one children aware that reading can be a silent process? [Do you speak when you read?] (Q44)		
- yes	51	85
- no	4	7
- sometimes	4	7
- I don't know	1	2
Total	60	100
Do you have to speak when you read? (Q45)		
- yes	33	55
- no	25	42
- other	1	2
- I don't know	1	2
Total	60	100
Why do you have to speak when you read? (Q46)		
- so people hear you	14	23
- because you're reading	3	5
- other	4	7
- I don't know	2	3
- didn't receive question	37	62
Total	60	100
How else can you read? (Q47)		
- in your mind	14	19
- just looking	6	10
- to yourself	10	17
- I don't know	8	13
- didn't receive question	22	37
Total	60	100

2.9 What are the qualities of a good reader? (Q27)

The Ss were simply asked, "What does a good reader have to know?" (Q27) to assess this concept. The results are presented in Table 8. The greatest percentage of responses, 47%, were grouped in the category "to know words." This category combined with the next two categories, "know letters" and "sound out words," showed that at least 60% of the Ss thought some knowledge of words or letters was needed for "good reading." Some "other" responses were: "lots of stuff," "books," "everything," etc.

These results indicated that the grade-one students in this study perceived reading as a word identification process rather than a "message-giving" process. The majority of answers made reference to word knowledge, virtually none related to meaning. These results are consistent with the findings of Muskopf (1962).

2.10 Why does the teacher ask questions about what you have read? (Q28)

The Ss were asked, "When you read, why does the teacher ask you questions?" (Q28). The results are also reported in Table 8. The majority of responses were found in the categories "other," 37%, and "I don't know," 23%. "Other" responses included the following: "she doesn't," "because you're good," "because to turn the page and stuff," and "it learns you how to make sentences." Thirteen percent of the replies, a small percentage, were found in the category "to see if you know the story." The remaining 27% of the Ss' answers were grouped into various "checking" categories (i.e., check on words or reading or if you know the answer).

Table 8

Good Reader Qualities and Purpose of Questions

	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
What does a good reader have to know? (Q27)		
- how to read	7	12
- know words	28	47
- know letters	3	5
- to sound out words	7	12
- other	8	13
- I don't know	7	12
Total	60	100
Why does teacher ask questions? (Q28)		
- comprehension (to see if you know the story)	8	13
- know words	7	12
- to see if you know the answer	4	7
- to check how good you are reading	5	8
- other	22	37
- I don't know	14	23
Total	60	100
Should you answer all the questions? (Q29)		
- yes	55	92
- no	5	8
Total	60	100
Why? (Q30)		
- get in trouble if don't	7	12
- be polite	9	15
- to show you know words	3	5
- to learn	4	7
- didn't receive question	5	8
- other	21	35
- I don't know	11	18
Total	60	100
Why not? (Q31)		
- know words by self	1	2
- didn't receive question	55	92
- other	3	5
- I don't know	1	2
Total	60	100

These results indicated that this question was difficult for the Ss to understand. Sixty percent of the Ss were grouped as "other" or "I don't know." It appeared, from these results, that nearly one-third of the Ss were certain that a teacher posed questions generally to check on their progress in word identification or to ascertain whether or not students had paid attention.

Next, the Ss were queried regarding whether they should answer all the questions asked (Q29). As noted in Table 8, 92% of the Ss responded "yes," yet 53% could offer no clearly definable reason (Q30), as evidenced by the summation of responses in the "other" and "I don't know" categories. Twenty-seven percent of the Ss offered a reason divorced from the act of reading itself. These were reflected in two categories, "be polite" and "get in trouble."

Results of Q29 to Q31 indicated that the grade-one students in this study had a clear perception of normal school routines (i.e., a teacher instructs, then he/she asks questions to note whether students paid attention as well as comprehended the lesson). Generally, this author has observed that if students are unable to correctly answer a question, a teacher might spend more time with that student; the resulting situation can become uncomfortable or embarrassing (despite good intentions) and may easily be perceived by such students as "being in trouble." Perhaps if the purposes of lessons or questions were consistently made clear to the students, the importance of gleaning meaning from reading would become more apparent.

Research Question Three

Research question three asked, "Is there any relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language?" As indicated earlier (page 69), the purpose question was separated into three questions: (1) "Why do you read in school?, (2) at home?, and (3) Why do other people read?" Therefore each of these questions was cross-tabulated with research questions 2.1-2.10, to observe if any significant relationships among them surfaced (Null Hypothesis One).

Why do you read in school? by Components

The results of these cross-tabulations are summarized in Table 9. One significant relationship was noted between author recognition and the purpose for reading in school. An examination of Table 10 shows that most of the Ss who recognized the author, 12 Ss, thought that people read in school for one of three reasons: to please the teacher, 3 Ss, learn words, 4 Ss, or because they had to, 2 Ss. It was interesting to note that none of these 12 Ss offered a reason for reading in school that could have fallen in the "other" category. Apparently, 11 Ss had a clearly established reason and 1 S had no reason.

Why do you read at home? by Components

These results are reported in Table 9 also. One significant relationship appeared between the purpose for reading at home and the function of spaces (research question 2.3, Q9). Table 11 illustrates a breakdown of this relationship. Thirty-three Ss read at home for

Table 9

Cross-tabulations—Purpose for Reading by Components of Written Language

Research Quest.	Survey Quest.	Read in School			Read at Home			Others Read		
		x^2	df	sig.	x^2	df	sig.	x^2	df	sig.
2.1	Q4	5.11	6	$p>.05$	5.15	7	$p>.05$	1.75	6	$p>.05$
2.2	Q6	23.87	18	$p>.05$	30.28	21	$p>.05$	16.99	18	$p>.05$
	Q7	3.35	6	$p>.05$	5.98	7	$p>.05$	7.10	6	$p>.05$
2.3	Q8	21.76	18	$p>.05$	30.37	21	$p>.05$	10.88	18	$p>.05$
	Q9	31.49	30	$p>.05$	50.28	35	$p<.05^*$	23.01	30	$p>.05$
2.4	Q10	10.41	18	$p>.05$	22.12	21	$p>.05$	12.20	18	$p>.05$
	Q11	19.02	12	$p>.05$	15.96	14	$p>.05$	10.76	12	$p>.05$
2.5	Q12	39.06	36	$p>.05$	44.51	42	$p>.05$	41.66	36	$p>.05$
	Q13	29.52	24	$p>.05$	31.05	28	$p>.05$	27.45	24	$p>.05$
	Q14	16.61	24	$p>.05$	30.39	28	$p>.05$	26.51	24	$p>.05$
2.6	Q15	9.03	6	$p>.05$	11.60	7	$p>.05$	2.98	6	$p>.05$
	Q16	18.90	12	$p>.05$	16.50	14	$p>.05$	8.31	12	$p>.05$
	Q17	20.94	18	$p>.05$	28.48	21	$p>.05$	7.26	18	$p>.05$
2.9	Q27	35.93	36	$p>.05$	31.03	42	$p>.05$	33.42	36	$p>.05$
2.10	Q28	30.20	30	$p>.05$	40.46	35	$p>.05$	30.39	30	$p>.05$
	Q29	5.40	6	$p>.05$	3.45	7	$p>.05$	3.05	6	$p>.05$
	Q30	35.90	35	$p>.05$	30.06	42	$p>.05$	32.66	36	$p>.05$
	Q31	17.03	18	$p>.05$	13.34	21	$p>.05$	14.92	18	$p>.05$
2.8	Q45	17.18	18	$p>.05$	13.67	21	$p>.05$	12.61	18	$p>.05$
	Q46	19.36	24	$p>.05$	28.23	28	$p>.05$	28.90	24	$p>.05$
	Q47	42.03	36	$p>.05$	40.55	42	$p>.05$	30.03	36	$p>.05$
2.7	Q55	37.74	24	$p<.05^*$	37.07	28	$p>.05$	20.98	24	$p>.05$

Table 10
Reading at School by Author Recognition

Author (What does "by . . ." tell you?)

Reading at School	what story is about	who wrote book	beginning of story	other	don't know	Row Total No.
need to know	5 8.3%	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	2 3.3%	7 11.7%	16
to learn (general)	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	2 3.3%	2 3.3%	7
teacher-approval		3 5.0%	1 1.7%	3 5.0%	1 1.7%	8
have to		2 3.3%	1 1.7%	2 3.3%		5
know words	2 3.3%	4 6.7%	2 3.3%			8
other	4 6.7%		2 3.3%	1 1.7%	3 5.0%	10
don't know		1 1.7%			5 8.3%	6
Column total No.	12	12	8	10	18	

Table 11

Purpose for Reading at Home by Purpose for Spaces

Home Reading	Purpose for Spaces						
	separate words	don't get words mixed	don't get words stuck	so letters aren't so close	other	don't know	
parent approval	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	▨	▨	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	Freq. Percentage
fun	2 3.3%	2 3.3%	5 8.3%	▨	2 3.3%	1 1.7%	
practice	▨	▨	1 1.7%	3 5.0%	3 5.0%	2 3.3%	
know words	2 3.3%	1 1.7%	4 6.7%	▨	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	
I don't	▨	▨	▨	▨	4 6.7%	▨	
to learn	2 3.3%	1 1.7%	▨	▨	▨	▨	
other	2 3.3%	2 3.3%	5 8.3%	▨	3 5.0%	2 3.3%	
don't know	▨	▨	1 1.7%	▨	3 5.0%	1 1.7%	

either fun, practice or to learn. Twenty-three Ss of this group gave clear reasons for the purpose of spaces in print; their responses fell in the first four categories. Four Ss responded that they "did not" read at home. These same Ss gave no clear reason for the purpose of spaces; their responses fell in the "other" category. Four of the five Ss who "did not know" why they read at home, also gave unclear reasons for the purpose of spaces.

If a S's reason for reading at home was clear (i.e., parent approval, fun, practice, to know words, or to learn), generally, these Ss gave an accurate reason for the use of spaces on a page of print. Perhaps such Ss had had more experience with written language which made the formal process of learning to read more meaningful for them. If so, these Ss might have had less difficulty learning the conventional concepts of letters and words as well as recognizing the need to distinguish one word from another when they appeared in printed form.

Why do other people read? by Components

These results can also be noted in Table 9. As indicated by the table, no significant relationships were observed. The response types for the second and third purpose questions, Q66 and Q67, were very similar (see Table 2). Perhaps these questions were too similar to discriminate any differences or yield any new information when related to each component question.

Research Question Four

Research question four asked, "Is there any relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and the method of instruction under which they were taught to read?" Again, the "purpose for reading" question was treated as three separate questions (page 69). Each of these was then cross-tabulated with the method of teaching to observe if any significant relationships surfaced among them. The results are shown in Table 12. (Null Hypothesis Two)

Table 12

Purpose for Reading by Method

		Method		
		x^2	df	Significance
Purpose	at school	34.84	12	$p<.01$*
	at home	11.62	14	$p>.05$
	others	14.97	12	$p>.05$

As noted in Table 12, one significant relationship appeared in this series of cross-tabulations between purpose for reading in school and method. Table 13 shows the specific breakdown of this cross-tabulation by response category. It can be seen that 30% of the Ss in the phonic group (P-group), 30% of the Ss in the language experience group (LE-group) and 20% of the SS in the eclectic group (E-group) responded that they "needed to learn how to read." This result suggests that these Ss recognized a global, undefined "need" to learn

Table 13

Purpose for Reading in School by Method

	Method		
Read in School	phonic	language experience	eclectic
need to learn to read	6 30% 10%	6 30% 10%	4 20% 6.7%
to learn (generally)	2 10% 3.3%	3 15% 5.0%	2 10% 3.3%
teacher approval	1 5.0% 1.7%	1 5.0% 1.7%	6 30% 10%
have to	5 25% 8.3%	▨	▨
to know words	▨	6 30% 10%	2 10% 3.3%
other	1 5.0% 1.7%	3 15% 5%	6 30% 10%
don't know	5 25% 8.3%	1 5.0% 1.7%	▨

frequency
column %
total %

to read. Perhaps these replies reflected an awareness of the importance of learning to read, but the reason underlying that importance may never have been made clear to these Ss. At the grade-one level, much school time is devoted to teaching reading, but is time spent making that teaching meaningful for the students? That is, are the students shown the relationship between spoken and written language so that they may apply their knowledge of "language" to the written form? Furthermore, are students shown how reading can become a useful tool in their daily lives? This result is consistent with the findings of Reid (1966), Downing (1970), and Denny and Weintraub (1966).

Twenty-five percent of the P-group responded that they "had to learn to read." No Ss in either the LE- or E-groups offered this response. Another 25% of the P-group answered that they "didn't know" why they read in school, whereas only 5% of the LE-group and 0% of the E-group offered this reply. Of the E-group, 30% of the responses were found in the category "teacher approval" as well as another 30% in the "other" category.

The categories of "have to" and "teacher approval" may have been related more to other teacher factors or school factors than an idea which grew from a "method" of teaching. That is, unconsciously, the teacher may have been stressing the attitude that "I will like you better, if you learn this for me." On the other hand, a "school attitude" of "no nonsense, students are here to learn" may have permeated all the classroom atmospheres. To young children, such influences might have been perceived as a paramount "purpose" if no other alternative was offered.

Thirty percent of the LE-group responded that they read in school "to know words." Though this is not a purpose which this author would expect to grow from a language-experience method, it may be expected from the language-experience approach as operationally defined in this study (learning to read as set out by the Gage *Language Experience Reading Program*). The Gage program begins with a strong emphasis on writing and reading the children's own language, but once books are introduced, the program becomes quite comprehensive, employing spelling, sight word exercises, listening activities, comprehension activities, and other language exercises in addition to continued writing and reading of the children's own language. Thus, the high number of *Ss* responding this way might be attributed to the strict use of this program.

In general, the LE- and E-groups always gave a reason for reading in school. In contrast 25% of the *Ss*' responses in the P-group were classed as "I don't know." Perhaps children who are just beginning have difficulty perceiving a message or meaning if they think of reading as "I suh-ē a buh-ĕ-duh.

Why do you read at home? by Method

The results of this relationship are found in Table 12. No significance was observed. It was found that method had no effect upon the kinds of concepts formed regarding one's purpose for reading at home.

Why do other people read? by Method

These results are also reported in Table 12. For this relationship also, significance was not reached. As above, it was found that method also had no effect upon the types of concepts formed about the purpose for reading in general.

Research Question Five

Research Question five asked, "Is there any relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their reading comprehension grade level?" (Null Hypothesis Three). As noted earlier the purpose for reading question was treated as three separate questions. Each of these was cross-tabulated with the comprehension grade level scores of all the Ss to determine if any significant relationships would surface. These results are summarized in Table 14. No significant relationships were found. It was found that comprehension level had no effect upon the kinds of concepts formed about the purpose for reading in the three given situations.

Table 14

Reading Comprehension by Purpose for Reading

		Comprehension		
		x^2	df	Significance
Purpose	Why read in school?	4.35	12	p>.05
	Why read at home?	12.18	14	p>.05
	Why do others read?	12.76	12	p>.05

These results are consistent with the findings of Edwards (1961) and Muskopf (1962), and are inconsistent with the findings of Johns (1974). The contrast with Johns' work may be due to the fact that he combined answers such as "understanding" and "word recognition" under one response type. Such answers in the present study were thought to be sufficiently different to warrant separate response ratings.

Research Question Six

Research question six asked, "Is there any relationship between grade-one children's concepts of selected components of written language and the method of instruction under which they were taught to read?" Research questions 2.1-2.10 were each cross-tabulated with method to discover if any significant relationships existed ($p \leqslant .05$). The results are shown in Table 15 (Null Hypothesis Four).

No significant relationships emerged. It was found that method did not appear to influence the types of concepts which these Ss formed about the components of written language. Regardless of method, all these components were either focused upon or not focused upon almost equally by each method. For example, 95% of the Ss recognized words as the symbols one learned to read, whereas only 20% of the Ss could correctly label a sentence. Neither of these components was significantly related to method.

Amongst these cross-tabulations, one relationship did approach significance: method and Q46 (Why do you speak when you read?). This result suggests that method might have some influence upon grade-one

Table 15

Method by Components of Written Language

	Research Question	Survey Question	Method		
			x^2	df	Significance
Components	2.1	Q4	2.11	2	$p > .05$
	2.2	Q6	10.02	6	$p > .05$
		Q7	.54	2	$p > .05$
	2.3	Q8	10.44	6	$p > .05$
		Q9	11.60	10	$p > .05$
	2.4	Q10	8.67	6	$p > .05$
		Q11	3.61	4	$p > .05$
	2.5	Q12	13.15	12	$p > .05$
		Q13	9.55	8	$p > .05$
		Q14	5.88	8	$p > .05$
	2.6	Q15	3.33	2	$p > .05$
		Q16	3.33	4	$p > .05$
		Q17	6.55	6	$p > .05$
	2.9	Q27	11.39	12	$p > .05$
	2.10	Q28	10.40	10	$p > .05$
		Q29	3.05	2	$p > .05$
		Q30	10.17	12	$p > .05$
		Q31	6.25	6	$p > .05$
	2.8	Q45	5.77	6	$p > .05$
		Q46	15.76	8	$p > .05$ ($p = .06$)
		Q47	15.80	12	$p > .05$
	2.7	Q55	10.98	8	$p > .05$

students' understanding of why they must speak when they read. As noted in Table 16, 37 Ss were not asked this question. To ascertain the effect of this category upon the significance of this relationship, a second cross-tabulation was run eliminating this category. These results are found in Table 17 which show that an appropriate level of significance was, in fact, not attained. Thus, the general finding that method did not appear to influence the formation of concepts of the components of written language was upheld.

Research Question Seven

Research question seven asked, "Is there any relationship between grade-one children's concepts of selected components of written language and their reading comprehension grade level?" Research questions 2.1-2.10 were each cross-tabulated with the Ss' comprehension grade level score, to determine if any significant relationships existed (Null Hypothesis Five).

The results are shown in Table 18. Two significant relationships ($p < .05$) were noted between comprehension and Q47 and between comprehension and Q55. Two other relationships approached significance, comprehension and Q10, and comprehension and Q14. Each is discussed separately in the following sections.

Comprehension by Q47 (Silent Reading)

Table 19 gives a breakdown by response category of this significant relationship. As can be noted in Table 19, 22 Ss were not asked this question. To ascertain the influence of this category upon the significance of this relationship, a second cross-tabulation was

Table 16

Method by Reason for Speaking when Reading

Reason

Method		so people hear	because you're reading	weren't asked the question	other	don't know	
	phonic	2 3.3%	1 1.7%	16 26.7%	1 1.7%	▨	
	language experience	8 13.3%	▨	10 16.7%	▨	2 3.3%	
	eclectic	4 6.7%	2 3.3%	11 18.3%	3 5%	▨	
	column total	14	3	37	4	2	60

Table 17

Method by Reason for Speaking when Reading
(Without Category 7)

Reason

		so people hear	because you are reading	other	don't know	
Method	phonic	2 8.7%	1 4.3%	1 4.3%	▨	
	language experience	8 34.8%	▨	▨	2 3.3%	
	eclectic	4 17.4%	2 8.7%	3 13%	▨	
	column total	14	3	4	2	23

$x^2 = 9.19$ df = 6 p = .16

Table 18

Comprehension by Components

		Comprehension		
Question	Question	x^2	df	Significance
2.1	Q4	1.21	2	$p > .05$
2.2	Q6	6.29	6	$p > .05$
	Q7	.57	2	$p > .05$
2.3	Q8	2.83	6	$p > .05$
	Q9	15.96	10	$p > .05$
2.4	Q10	11.98	6	$p > .05$ ($p=.06$)
	Q11	4.68	4	$p > .05$
2.5	Q12	16.07	12	$p > .05$
	Q13	10.09	8	$p > .05$
	Q14	14.39	8	$p > .05$
2.6	Q15	1.04	2	$p > .05$ ($p=.07$)
	Q16	3.42	4	$p > .05$
	Q17	6.24	6	$p > .05$
2.9	Q27	9.12	12	$p > .05$
2.10	Q28	6.11	10	$p > .05$
	Q29	2.25	2	$p > .05$
	Q30	3.71	12	$p > .05$
	Q31	5.05	6	$p > .05$
2.8	Q45	4.67	6	$p > .05$
	Q46	6.77	8	$p > .05$
	Q47	22.59	12	$p < .05$*
2.7	Q55	19.90	8	$p < .05$*

Table 19

Comprehension by Silent Reading

Silent Reading

		in your mind	just looking	don't say anything	to yourself	quietly	weren't asked	don't know	
Comprehension	Low	4 6.7%	3 5.0%	▨	1 1.7%	▨	7 11.7%	6 10%	21
	Av.	5 8.3%	1 1.7%	▨	▨	4 6.7%	13 21.7%	2 3.3%	25
	High	5 8.3%	2 3.3%	1 1.7%	2 3.3%	2 3.3%	2 3.3%	▨	14
									60

made eliminating this category. These new results are shown in Table 20 where it was noted that the level of significance did drop, p = .11.

Looking over Table 20, it was noted that most of the Ss composing the category "I don't know" had low comprehension scores. It was also noted that as comprehension improved there was a tendency for more Ss to demonstrate an understanding of the silent reading process. This tendency can be seen by observing only the first five categories: 8 Ss in the low group, 10 Ss in the average group, and 12 Ss in the high group. By common sense, this result could be predicted. One would expect those children with higher comprehension scores to be those who read more and most likely faster also. If they read more and read faster, too, such children would probably read silently because it *is* quicker. Consequently, their familiarity with silent reading would be greater.

Comprehension by Q55 (Author Recognition)

Table 21 presents a specific breakdown by response category of this relationship. The Ss whose comprehension scores fell in the low range did not answer this question correctly. Ss in this group also gave more responses, 15 out of 21, classified as "other" or "don't know." Ss whose scores fell in the average range gave almost an equal number of responses in all categories. Of Ss whose scores fell in the high range, 7 Ss knew the answer, 4 Ss did not know, and 3 Ss' answers fell in the first category.

Only Ss whose comprehension scores fell in the average or high range presented an accurate definition of an author and recognized the

Table 20

Comprehension by Silent Reading
(Without Category 7)

Silent Reading

Comprehension	in your mind	just looking	don't say anything	to yourself	quietly	I don't know	Total
low	4 10.5%	3 7.9%	▨	1 2.6%	▨	6 15.8%	14
average	5 13.2%	1 2.6%	▨	▨	4 10.6%	2 5.3%	12
high	5 13.2%	2 5.3%	1 2.6%	2 5.3%	2 5.3%	▨	12
							38

$x^2 = 15.77$; df = 10; p = .11

Table 21

Comprehension by Author Recognition

Author Recognition

Comprehension		what story is about	who wrote it	beginning of story	other	don't know
	low	3 5.0%	▨	3 5.0%	6 10.0%	9 15.0%
	average	6 10.0%	5 8.3%	5 8.3%	4 6.7%	5 8.3%
	high	3 5.0%	7 11.7%	▨	▨	4 6.7%

print "by . . ." as giving reference to an author. Those Ss whose scores fell in the low range responded in many ways, but most frequently they indicated that they "did not know."

In general, those in the high group either knew the answer or did not know the answer. Again, these results might be expected purely on the basis of common sense. Those Ss with higher comprehension scores may be the ones who read more themselves, have been read to more at home, or who are more interested in reading. Any of these reasons might enable a child to be more familiar with authors and their relationship to books or stories.

Comprehension by Q10 (Sentence Recognition)

The relationship between comprehension and Q10 approached significance (p = .06). Table 22 shows the breakdown by response group. From the table, two trends were readily observable. As comprehension improved, the number of responses in the "other" and "I don't know" categories decreased. Also, as comprehension increased, the number of correct responses (sentence) increased.

The trends exhibited in Table 22 suggest that Ss in the low group were not aware of the label "sentence," whereas more Ss in the average and high group were aware of this label. Again this result might be predicted by common sense. One would assume that children who scored higher on comprehension tests might read more than those who scored lower. If they read more it would follow that they were more familiar with written language and printing conventions. Having such familiarity would set the stage for meaningful learning when a teacher mentioned that this unit was called a "sentence." If

Table 22

Comprehension by Sentence Recognition

		Sentence Recognition				
		sentence	words	other	don't know	
Comprehension	low	1	8	5	7	frequency
		1.7%	13.3%	8.3%	11.7%	total %
	average	5	13	1	6	
		8.3%	21.7%	1.7%	10%	
	high	6	4	2	2	
		10%	6.7%	3.3%	3.3%	

meaningful learning occurred perhaps the label was remembered more easily.

Comprehension by Q14 (Function of Letters)

This relationship between comprehension and the function of letters also approached significance, p = .07. Table 23 presents the results of this relationship.

It was noted that as comprehension improved, the percentage of responses in the category "make words" increased and the percentage of responses in the category "for reading" decreased. This trend suggests that higher comprehenders were exhibiting a more specific concept regarding the purpose of letters. However, it was interesting to note that one _S_ in the high group offered the response "spelling" when three _Ss_ in the low group and three _Ss_ in the average group offered this response. Thus, the trend of higher comprehension coexisting with more specific concepts (regarding the purpose of letters) did not exist for this category. In general, by summing the first two categories, it was noted that low comprehenders, 4 _Ss_, had a less specific concept of the function letters performed than did average, 8 _Ss_, and high comprehenders, 8 _Ss_.

Table 23

Comprehension by Function of Letters

Comprehension		Function of Letters				
		make words	spelling	reading	other	don't know
low	frequency	1	3	15	2	
	total %	1.7%	5.0%	25%	3.3%	
average	frequency	5	3	12	3	2
	total %	8.3%	5.0%	20%	5.0%	3.3%
high	frequency	7	1	6		
	total %	11.7%	1.7%	10%		

Summary of Findings

Comments about the Purposes of Reading

1. Twenty-seven percent of the Ss apparently understood that one read in school in order to learn how to read.

2. Twenty percent of the Ss apparently understood that one read at home for enjoyment.

3. Twenty-eight percent of the Ss apparently understood that other people also read for enjoyment or to learn something (18%).

4. However, for each of the above observations, a minimum of 25% of the Ss were unable to demonstrate a sound understanding for the purpose of reading.

Comments about the Components of Written Language

1. Virtually all of the Ss (95%) understood that the primary part of a page that was read was the printed words.

2. The majority of Ss (81%) correctly labeled words and defined their function as "for reading."

3. Forty-seven percent of the Ss correctly labeled spaces, yet 58% demonstrated a clear understanding of the function of spaces.

4. Twenty percent of the Ss correctly labeled sentences, and 73% defined the function of sentences as "for reading."

5. Fifty-five percent of the Ss correctly labeled letters and most of these defined the function of letters as "for reading." However, 33% did give a more precise definition of function regardless of whether or not they attributed the correct label.

These findings demonstrated that the majority of grade-one Ss interviewed, perceived the functions of letters, words, and sentences in a very global manner. These entities all had some relationship to "reading," but a precise understanding of their separate functions had not yet surfaced, apparently.

6. Twenty percent of the Ss correctly identified "by . . ." as a writer.

7. At least half of the Ss were aware that reading could be done silently in addition to orally.

8. Almost half the Ss (46%) equated "good reading" with word recognition.

9. Almost two-thirds of the Ss were unable to offer an adequate reason for the teacher asking questions. Yet 92% of the Ss agreed that one should answer all those questions.

Relationships

1. When comparing the purpose for reading with the components of written language, two significant relationships were observed (66 relationships were examined).

   a. There was a significant relationship between the purpose for reading in school and recognition of an author.

   b. There was a significant relationship between the purpose for reading at home and the function spaces perform.

2. When comparing the purpose for reading with method, one significant relationship was observed (three were examined).

   a. There was a significant relationship between the purpose for reading at school and method.

3. When comparing the purpose for reading with comprehension, no significant relationships were observed (three relationships were examined).

4. When comparing the components of written language with method, no significant relationships were found (22 were examined).

5. When comparing the Ss' comprehension grade levels with their understandings of the components of written language, one significant relationship was observed (22 relationships were examined).

a. There was a significant relationship between comprehension and author recognition.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate grade-one students' concepts of the purpose for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language. This study also investigated whether these concepts were related to method of instruction or reading comprehension grade level.

The sample consisted of 60 grade-one subjects (Ss) from five classrooms in three Edmonton Catholic Schools. The study involved a survey using the Related Concepts of Reading Questionnaire (RCRQ) which was constructed for this investigation. This 67-question instrument was administered individually to each S. A group reading comprehension test, sections R1, R2, and R3 of the Canadian Test of Basic Skills (1976), was also administered. All data were collected and analyzed by the author.

A descriptive analysis was given of responses to target questions on the RCRQ. The chi-square statistic was used to test the hypotheses of this study, and a probability level of .05 was adopted. The Binomial Test was used to judge inter-rater reliability and test-retest reliability. The results of these analyses are reported in the following sections, but the reader is reminded that these findings should be interpreted cautiously because students scoring at the extreme ends of the CTBS were retained causing the three method groups to be less homogeneous.

Findings

Inter-rater Reliability

Three judges were compared on rating the RCRQ responses of eight randomly selected subjects. The Binomial Test was applied to each comparison and the results showed that there were no significant differences ($p < .05$) among the judges' ratings.

Test-retest Reliability

Twenty Ss were randomly selected and administered the RCRQ a second time to note the consistency of their responses. Results of the Binomial Test showed that though Ss' second responses agreed at a rate of 62%, significance ($p < .10$) was not attained.

Research Question One

Research question one asked: What do grade-one children verbalize about the purpose for reading? From the responses collected concerning this question, the following main observations were noted:

1. Twenty-seven percent of the grade-one subjects (Ss) deemed the purpose of reading in school to be to learn how to read.
2. Twenty percent of the grade-one Ss deemed the purpose of reading at home to be for enjoyment.
3. Twenty-eight percent of the grade-one Ss deemed the purpose for which other people read to be enjoyment also.
4. A minimum of 25% of the grade-one Ss were unable to verbalize any sound purpose for reading in each of the above situations.

Research Question Two

Research question two asked: What do grade-one children verbalize about selected components of written language? The following major observations were noted among the associated responses to this question:

1. Ninety-five percent of the grade-one Ss recognized that the major part of a page to be read was the printed words.

2. Eighty-two percent of the grade-one Ss correctly labeled words and defined their function as "for reading."

3. Forty-seven percent of the grade-one Ss correctly labeled spaces, but 58% correctly verbalized their function.

4. Twenty percent of the grade-one Ss correctly labeled sentences and 73% defined their function as "for reading."

5. Fifty-five percent of the grade-one Ss correctly labeled letters and 55% defined their function as "for reading" yet another 33% defined their function more precisely (to make words or spelling).

6. Twenty percent of the grade-one Ss recognized "by . . ." as an author.

7. Fifty percent of the grade-one Ss were aware of reading as a silent process.

8. Forty-six percent of the grade-one Ss equated "good reading" with word recognition.

9. Nearly 66% of the grade-one Ss were unable to offer an adequate reason for why a teacher asks questions yet 92% agreed that one should answer all the questions asked.

Null Hypothesis One (Research Question Three)

Hypothesis one stated: There is no significant relationship ($p \leqslant .05$) between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their concepts of selected components of written language. To test this hypothesis each component of written language (research question 2.1-2.10) was individually compared with the purpose for reading questions (in school, at home, and in general). The null hypothesis was accepted for 64 of the 66 relationships examined. The null hypothesis was rejected for two relationships:

a. A significant relationship existed between the purpose for reading in school and recognition of an author.

b. A significant relationship existed between the purpose for reading at home and the function spaces perform.

Null Hypothesis Two (Research Question Four)

Hypothesis two stated: There is no significant relationship between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and the method of instruction under which they were taught to read. The null hypothesis was accepted for two of the three relationships examined here: purpose for reading at home by method and purpose for reading in general by method. The null hypothesis was rejected for one relationship, namely that between the purpose for reading at school and method.

Null Hypothesis Three (Research Question Five)

Hypothesis three stated: There is no significant relationship ($p \leqslant .05$) between grade-one children's concepts of the purpose for reading and their reading comprehension score. Three relationships were examined: purpose for reading at school by comprehension, purpose for reading at home by comprehension, and purpose for reading in general by comprehension. For each relationship the level of acceptance was $p > .05$, therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted in each case.

Null Hypothesis Four (Research Question Six)

Hypothesis four stated: There is no significant relationship ($p \leqslant .05$) between grade-one children's concepts of selected components of written language and the method of instruction under which they were taught to read. Twenty-two relationships were examined and the null hypothesis was accepted for each.

Null Hypothesis Five (Research Question Seven)

Hypothesis five stated: There is no significant relationship ($p \leq .05$) between grade-one children's concepts of selected components of written language and their reading comprehension score. Twenty-two relationships were examined and the null hypothesis was accepted for 21 of these. The null hypothesis was rejected for one relationship, namely, that of comprehension and author recognition.

Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from the findings and with the limitations noted are reported in three sections relating to research question one, research question two, and the null hypotheses.

Relevant to Research Question One

1. A majority of children in similar populations could be expected to verbalize some purpose for reading. Their stated purposes would probably be similar to the following: to gain adult approval, to know words or practice, and enjoyment. In addition, students in similar populations, would likely only associate the purpose of "enjoyment" with reading at home, and the purpose of "learning how to read" with reading at school.

2. For children in similar populations, it could be expected that one child of every four will be unable to offer any viable reason for reading in any situation. These children could be said to be attempting to learn a meaningless skill.

Relevant to Research Question Two

1. Grade-one children in similar populations could be expected to easily identify a word on a page of print.

2. For grade-one children in similar populations, it could be expected that the majority would perceive the functions of letters, words, and sentences as "for reading." Therefore, it could be concluded that grade-one children have not begun to discriminate the singlar functions of these concepts.

3. With grade-one children in similar populations, one would expect the majority to be unable to offer viable reasons regarding why teachers pose questions during reading lessons.

4. Nearly half the grade-one children in similar populations could be expected to equate "good reading" with "good word-recognition skills."

5. In similar populations, one could expect half the grade-one children to be aware of silent reading.

6. The majority of grade-one children in similar populations could be expected to be unaware of the author's relationship to a story.

Relevant to Null Hypotheses

1. (Research Question Three) The following conclusions for grade-one children in similar populations were drawn:

a. that, generally, their concepts of the purpose for reading would not be related to their concepts of the components of written language,

b. that, specifically, their concepts of the purpose for reading in school would be related to author recognition, and

c. that their concepts of the purpose for reading at home would be related to their concepts of the function of spaces.

2. (Research Question Four) For grade-one children in similar populations, it could be expected that their concepts of the purpose of reading in school would be affected by the method of teaching.

3. (Research Question Five) With grade-one children in similar populations, one could expect their reading comprehension levels to be unrelated to their concepts of the purposes for reading.

4. (Research Question Six) In similar populations, one could expect grade-one children's concepts of the components of written language to be unaffected by the method of teaching.

5. (Research Question Seven) For grade-one children in similar populations the following conclusions could be expected:

a. that, generally, their reading comprehension level would not be related to their concepts of the components of written language, and

b. that their reading comprehension level would be related to author recognition.

Implications

From the findings of this study and the resulting conclusions, the following implications are suggested for children similar to those used in the study:

1. It was concluded that a majority of grade-one children tend to verbalize purposes for reading centered around adult approval, knowing more words, and enjoyment (though this purpose was never associated with school). Therefore, teachers should be cognizant of these student conceptions if they, as educators, wish to foster the development of purposes different from those the children have and which would focus on reading for meaning. Such a focus might yield greater student satisfaction since students would then have the opportunity to realize the printed page can give them something, namely, ideas. In this way, a more meaningful learning situation would be produced.

2. It was concluded that one-quarter of a group of grade-one children would be unable to verbalize any purpose for reading. If teachers are aware of this fact, they might plan to identify such children early in the year and offer this group additional lessons to

develop concepts of purposes for reading. Thus, learning to read could grow into a meaningful enterprise for such children.

3. Since the majority of grade-one children are unlikely to understand the precise functions of words, letters, and sentences, teachers using these technical terms in the classroom should be aware of the meaning their students attach to the terms and make adjustments to expose the children to the teacher's meaning.

4. Because grade-one children are not likely to understand why teachers ask questions about reading, to make this necessary aspect of the teaching-learning situation meaningful for the students, teachers should consider discussing the purpose of questions or simply informing the students why the questions are posed.

5. Teachers should be aware that nearly half of the grade-one children could be expected to equate "good reading" with good word-recognition skills. When planning lessons, perhaps more time should be allotted for "retelling" stories read to develop the idea that "good understanding" is essential for "good reading."

6. Since it was concluded that the majority of the grade-one children could be expected to be unaware of the author's relationship to a story, writers of children's reading series might consider clearly marking the author of each selection within a book. Where possible, such writers might enclose a discussion containing background information of the author's life so that teachers can start to develop the concept of reading as communicating with a person, namely, the author.

7. It was concluded that only half of a group of grade-one

children could be expected to realize reading could be a silent process. If teachers wish to develop independent silent reading habits, they may have to plan lessons whereby the children will become aware of this option.

8. Because the concepts grade-one children form about the purpose for reading in school are likely to be influenced by the method of instruction, teachers should be aware that certain methods will produce different concepts and tailor their methods to achieve the result they desire. In addition, those engaged in teacher education should be sensitive to this finding in order that they communicate this knowledge to teachers in pre-service education programs.

9. Since achievement level in reading comprehension was unrelated to concepts of purposes for reading perceived by grade-one children, it would behoove teachers to develop such concepts with all students. The pacing and content of such lessons could be differentiated to match various achievement groups within a class.

Suggestions for Further Research

The present study addressed only one group of children at one developmental stage of a particular description noted. Additional insights regarding the development of concepts of reading and the components of written language could be gained through a developmental study. Perhaps a four-year study where the RCRQ was administered to the same Ss at the end of kindergarten, grade one, grade two, and grade three would yield valuable information about the stage at which these concepts become more precise and the nature of conceptual changes from chronological level to chronological level.

Since method was found to be significantly related ($p < .05$) to grade-one children's concepts of purposes for reading in school, a more controlled experimental design following a pre-test, treatment, post-test paradigm might delineate which specific concepts reflected the influences of particular methods. For example, beginning grade-one students might be pre-tested with all or part of the RCRQ. The following method treatments might consist of a set period of teaching reading in strict accordance to well-defined methods (i.e., phonic and language experience). The investigator would probably need to train teachers to assure a strict methodology as well as include a control group. Following treatment, students could be post-tested with RCRQ and the results analyzed for significant differences among the groups.

Given a group of grade-one children similar to those in this study, it was concluded that one-quarter would be unable to offer any reason for reading. The further suggestion was made that lessons could be prepared to stimulate the development of concepts of purposes for reading. Another study using a pre-test, treatment, post-test design, might investigate different techniques of teaching these concepts to such children. For example, the RCRQ could be used to identify a group of children (pre-test). Treatment could consist of three methods: direct lessons on purposes for reading, lessons studying children's literature, and time for free reading (control). Then post-testing with the RCRQ might yield information regarding

(1) whether any learning occurred in each group, and (2) significant differences among the groups on purposes for reading. Consequently, a method for teaching concepts of purposes for reading might be made available to teachers at large.

Though this study attempted to control the influences of varying environmental backgrounds by using _Ss_ with a common period of formal reading instruction, it was inevitable that some variance was unaccounted for due to the unknown factors of individual environments. A tighter control of these background factors might be realized by using a parent questionnaire in conjunction with the _RCRQ_. A parent questionnaire might detail such items as amount of time spent reading to the child, types of literature commonly found in the home, when, and if the child began to read himself, etc. Such factors could produce long-lasting influences upon the types of concepts young children develop about purposes of reading and components of written language.

Since grade-one children's retest responses to the _RCRQ_ were found to be significantly different from their first responses, it would seem to indicate a need for more researchers to obtain similar information when interviewing young children. More research in this area might eventually determine the limits of reliability to be expected from young children.

A further suggestion might be to reanalyze these test-retest data in two parts, target questions and other questions.

Concluding Statement

Grade-one students' concepts of purposes for reading were found to focus upon their immediate needs rather than perceiving meaning (i.e., knowing words, practicing, adult approval, etc.). If these young children could be guided to recognize that by reading they receive "ideas" and gain satisfaction from the discovery of these ideas, their motivation might become internal and, consequently, result in a more meaningful learning situation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RELATED CONCEPTS OF READING QUESTIONNAIRE (RCRQ)

WARM-UP QUESTIONS

DIRECTIONS: I'm going to ask you some questions and I'll write down what you say. I'll turn on the tape recorder. In case I miss something, I can check later on the tape.

NAME ____________ NO. ____ AGE ____ FAVORITE COLOR ____________ FAVORITE GAME ____________

TEACHER'S NAME ____________ SCHOOL ____________ DATE ____________

Do you like school? Why? ____________

RELATED CONCEPTS OF READING QUESTIONNAIRE (RCRQ)

I. PHYSICAL ASPECTS

Q1
1. Present book. What is this? (What is this called?) ____________

Q2
2. What do you do with a (book)? ____________

3. (Hand book vertically to child and note what happens.)

Q3
Show me where you would start. ____________

Q4
4. Turn to selected page. What parts do you read? ____________

Q5
5. Which way do you go? (show me) ____________

II. WORD, LETTER, SENTENCE CONCEPTS

6. What are Q6 these called? Point to several words. ______________________________

6a. What are Q7 they (words) for? ______________________

7. What are Q8 these called? (spaces) ______________________

7a. What are Q9 they (spaces) for? ______________________

8. What is Q10 this (called)? Point to a sentence, blocked off. What Q11 is this for? ______________

____

9. What is this Q12 (a word) made of? What are Q13 these (called)? ______________________________

Point to several words in a letter. What are Q14 they for? ______________________________

10. Point to a specific word (boy). Would this Q15 word say "toy"? Q16 Why/Q17 Why not? ______________

Pronounced = Q18 Why not? = Q19

11. Point to a period. What is Q20 this called? What does it Q21 tell you to do? ______________

Point to a question mark. What is Q22 this called? What does it Q23 tell you to do? ______________

____

III. QUALITIES OF GOOD READERS AND TEACHER QUESTIONS

Q24

12. How well do you read? ____________________

Q25 Q26

13. What makes you a good (or poor) reader? ____________________

Q27

What does a good reader have to do/know? ____________________

Q28

14. When you read, why does the teacher ask questions? ____________________

Q29 Q30

15. Should you answer all the questions? Why? ________ Why not? = Q31 ________

Q32

16. Does a good reader answer all the questions? Why? = Q33 Why not? = Q34 ________

Q35 Q36

17. Are some questions hard? Why? What makes them hard? Why not? = Q37 ________

IV. HOME READING—ORAL/SILENT

Q38 Q39

18. Do mom and dad read? ____________ What do they read? ____________

Q40 Q41

19. Do they read the same way you do? ________ How do they read? ____________

Q42 Q43

20. Do they read to you? ________ What? ____________________

21. Do you Q44 speak when you read? ______ Do you have to Q45 speak when you read? ______

Why? = Q46 Why not? or How else can you read? = Q47 ______

22. Do you always speak Q48 when you read at school? Q50 at home? ______ Q49 Q51 Why? ______

23. Do you need the Q52 teacher in order to read? ______ Q53 Why? ______ Why not? = Q54 ______

V. RECOGNITION OF AUTHOR

24. Point to "by . . . ." What does Q55 this tell you? ______

25. Where did these Q57 (words) come from? ______ Q58 = did machine make up words? ______

Q59 = What made up the words? ______

26. Why did Q60 he/she write them? ______

27. Pronounce the author and repeat "What does Q56 this tell you?" ______

VI. PURPOSE FOR READING

28. Can Q61 you read? ______

29. Do you Q62 want to read? Do you Q63 like to read (if answers 28 "yes")? ______

Q64
30. What do you like to read? ______________________________

____

Q65
31. Why do you read in school? ______________________________

Q66
at home? ______________________________

Q67
32. Why do other people read? ______________________________

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF TWO INTERVIEWS

Transcription One: Subject #30

Interviewer (I): What's this?

Subject (S): a book.

I: What do you do with a book?

S: Read it. But I don't read it, I look at it.

I: O.K. Could you show me where you would start?

S: Right here. (S had opened the book to page 2; the beginning of the first story.)

I: O.K. Can you point to the parts you would read?

S: These and these and all the parts (S had pointed to the words).

I: Can you show me exactly where you would start to read on page 2? Point with your finger. Which way would you go?

S: This way (S points left to right correctly).

I: Then where?

S: There.

I: Then where?

S: Then go there, there, there, there . . .

I: O.K. Paul, what are these called that I'm pointing to? You don't have to read 'em, just tell me what they're called. . . . What're those things called? You know all those things, what're they called?

S: This?

I: All of 'em. What are those things called?

S: I don't know this one.

I: No, I don't want you to read 'em, o.k.? Got it? You don't have to read 'em. Try it over here. What are these things called?

S: I don't know what you mean!

I: O.K. Do you know what these are for? All these things I'm pointing to?

S: Yeah, for reading.

I: O.K. Good. Now, look real close, this is a hard one for most people to see. What are these? See what I'm pointing to, that part right there?

S: Yeah, there's two lines in each one except the last one. They're just little dots.

I: Let's look over here. There's not supposed to be anything there. O.K. See that part right there?

S: Yes.

I: What are those?

S: Just empty rows.

I. O.K. What are they there for? What are the empty rows for?

S: Because if they were all together, the word would be mixed up together in whole sentences.

I: Good.
O.K. Paul, I'm going to cover up a part here and . . . can you hold the paper?

S: Yes.

I: Good.

S: I can still see right through.

I: That's o.k. I just want you to look at the part that's uncovered. What's this whole thing called?

S: Words.

I: O.K. What are they for?

S: For reading!

I: O.K. Now what are each of these called? (repeating Q6)

S: Words.

I: O.K. What are they for?

S: Reading.

I: Good. O.K. Paul, what's this word made of?

S: I don't know.

I: O.K. What are these called?

S: Letters.

I: What are letters for?

S: For spelling.

I: Anything else?

S: For the a-b-c?

I: O.K. Would this word say "toy"?

S: Yes, if there was a "t" in the front of it.

I: O.K. What's that?

S: A dot.

I: What does it tell you to do?

S: To stop.

I: O.K. What's this?

S: Question mark.

I: What does it tell you to do?

S: That it's a question, that's what it tells you to do? I think.

I: Good.

S: To read the question.

I: Good. How well do you read Paul?

S: Pretty good, but not in these books.

I: Because you've never seen that book?

S: No.

I: Yeah.

S: And I never seen these words, only some of them.

I: What makes you a "pretty good" reader?

S: By practicing at home.

I: Good.

S: With a book.

I: Good. What does a "good reader" have to know?

S: How to read.

I: What does he have to know in order to read?

S: To know the letters and the sounds.

I: When you read, why does the teacher ask questions, about the reading?

S: I don't know.

I: O.K. Should you answer all the questions that she asks you?

S: Yeah, but some of them are kind of hard.

I: What makes some of them hard?

S: By . . . I don't know why, but they're hard.

I: Does a "good reader" answer all the questions a teacher asks him?

S: Only some . . . most of them.

I: Why?

S: Because they know most of them.

I: Good. Do Mom and Dad read?

S: Yeah.

I: What do they read?

S: Books.

I: What kind of books?

S: My dad reads paper from his work, notes, and my mom reads books.

I: O.K. Do they read the same way as you do?

S: No, not really.

I: How do they read?

S: They read in a different language . . . with different kinds of books from different city.

I: Do they read to you?

S: No, they read to thereself. They even read my notes I learn from school. Soon as my brother is in kindergarten.

I: Do you speak when you read?

S: Yes.

I: Do you have to speak when you read?

S: No.

I: How else can you read?

S: You can tell by your mind and looking at it. Sometimes I do that. At home.

I: Yeah. It's faster isn't it?

S: Um hum. And it's better so you don't have to keep talking and talking and getting tired.

I: Do you always speak when you read in school?

S: What?

I: (Repeats question)

S: No, not when I'm reading the book only when I'm reading the books.

I: Good. Do you always speak when you read at home?

S: No.

I: Good.

S: I never do. I only speak . . . go, tell by my mind, and watching all the letters.

I: Good. Do you need the teacher in order to read?

S: Yeah. No.

I: Why not?

S: Because I know most, some of, all the words . . . and the book.

I: Good.

S: Because we practiced that at school, too.

I: O.K. I'm gonna take this one and show another one.

S: Oh, that big fat book.

I: Well, we're only going to look at one little page. Can you hold it for me?

S: Yeah, sure. This story?

I: Yup, this one. And cover up that part again. Now, you see this little part here?

S: Em, hum.

I: What does that tell you?

S: It's a word.

I: That tells you it's a word?

S: Yeah.

I: O.K. You can take the paper away now. Where did the words come from?

S: Letters.

I: How did they get there?

S: Letters?

I: How did the words get there?

S: By typewriters.

I: Did the typewriters make up the story?

S: No. Some other people done it and wrote it down on a paper and then they typed it the other people.

I: Why did they type 'em? or write 'em? Why'd they write the words?

S: So uh, that they wouldn't, em, do it theirself. Doing, getting tired of writing and typing. So the other person does it.

I: Well, why did the first person write 'em, in the first place?

S: Because . . . I don't know. Because I don't know.

I: O.K. This says, "By Leo Israel." What does that tell you?

S: By Leo Israeli?

I: Uh-huh. What does that tell you?

S: Just tells that he's really.

I: Oh, O.K.

S: That he's really a person.

I: Oh, O.K.

S: Or something.

I: Can you read?

S: Yes.

I: Do you like to read?

S: Em hum. Yes.

I: What do you like to read?

S: Books and papers.

I: What kind of books?

S: Any kinds, if the words are not hard.

I: Good reason. Why do you read in school?

S: Because I have to, to learn how to read. And school's are supposed to teach people to read and stuff like that, too.

I: Why do you read at home?

S: So I can be good at school.

I: Why do other people read?

S: Same reason as I said.

Transcription Two: Subject #47

Interviewer (I): What's this?

Subject (S): A book.

I: What do you do with a book?

S: Read it.

I: Could you show me where you would start the book?

S: (S turned to page 2.)

I: All right. Can you point to the parts you read?

S: (S pointed to the words.)

I: And show me exactly where you would start reading? Point with your finger. Which way do you go?

S: That way.

I: Then where? Good girl. O.K. Sandy, you do not have to read for me. What are these called? These things I'm pointing to.

S: The words.

I: Em-hum. What are these words for?

S: To read.

I: O.K. Now look real close where I'm going to point this time. See where I'm pointing?

S: Em-hum.

I: What are these?

S: The words, no.

I: I'm pointing to a word right here?

S: No.

I: What are these?

S: Little spaces.

I: What are those little spaces for Sandy?

S: They're to let you have a rest.

I: O.K. Is that why the little spaces are here? What are they there for?

S: I don't know.

I: O.K. Can you turn your page? All right. Now, what's this whole thing called? Do you know what this whole thing's called?

S: Lines of the words.

I: O.K. What are lines for?

S: To write on.

I: Is that what these lines are for? What are these lines for?

S: They're to read.

I: O.K. All right. What's this word made of?

S: I don't know.

I: O.K. Now watch where I point. What are these?

S: Little words.

I: O.K. Sandy, what are these little words for? These I'm pointing to.

S: They're to read, like you read them.

I: All right, Sandy, would this word say "toy"?

S: Em-em (no).

I: Why not?

S: Because it says . . . because it doesn't have a "t" at the first.

I: All right. What's that?

S: Period.

I: What does a period tell you to do?

S: To stop reading.

I: O.K. What's this? What's that?

S: I don't know.

I: Do you know what it tells you to do?

S: To keep on reading?

I: O.K. Sandy are you a good reader?

S: Yeah.

I: How well do you read?

S: Good.

I: K. What makes you a good reader?

S: I don't know.

I: What does a good reader have to know?

S: To read the letters.

I: When you read, why does the teacher ask questions?

S: I don't know.

I: Should you answer all the questions she asks you?

S: Pardon.

I: Should you answer all the questions she asks you?

S: Because if you don't you might get a spanking or something.

I: Does a good reader answer all the questions that the teachers asks him?

S: Yes.

I: Why?

S: I don't know.

I: Are some of the questions hard?

S: Yes.

I: What makes some of the questions hard?

S: The big letters, the big word.

I: O.K. Do Mom and Dad read? Sandy?

S: Yes.

I: What do they read?

S: Papers from the mail.

I: What else do they read?

S: Newspaper.

I: What else do they read?

S: Books.

I: Anything else? That's all you can think of? That's pretty good. Do they read the same way as you do?

S: No.

I: How do they read, Sandy?

S: They read in writing.

I: Do they read any other way?

S: Sometimes our way.

I: Do they read to you?

S: Yes.

I: What do they read to you?

S: They read stories before bed.

I: Do you speak when you read, Sandy?

S: Em. sometimes.

I: Do you have to speak when you read?

S: No.

I: How else can you read?

S: Em, silently.

I: Do you always speak when you read in school?

S: Yeah.

I: Do you always speak when you read at home?

S: Sometimes.

I: Do you need the teacher around in order to read?
Don't know?

S: (S indicated she didn't know.)

I: O.K. Now I'm going to show you something in this book.
See this part right here?

S: Em, hum.

I: What does that tell you, Sandy. This little part.

S: The story, where you start from.

I: Where did the words come from?

S: People, they write them.

I: Why did the people write them?

S: So other people can read it.

I: I'm going to tell you what this says. It says "by Leo Israel."
What does that tell you?

S: That it's a boy or a man.

I: Can you read?

S: Yes.

I: Do you like to read?

S: Yes.

I: What do you like to read?

S: Easy stories.

I: Anything else?

S: Books.

I: Why do you read in school?

S: Because it's important.

I: What's important?

S: So you get to learn.

I: Learn about what?

S: All the words in school.

I: Why do you read at home?

S: So you learn more words.

I: Why do you want to learn more words?

S: I don't know.

I: Why do other people read?

S: To learn more things.

I: What kind of things?

S: I don't know.

APPENDIX C

THANK YOU LETTER AND CTBS RESULTS

Jean McLaughlin
5141 - 106A Street
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Ms. ________________,

Thank you so much for volunteering your students for this study. The time you spent talking with me, and your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

I've enclosed the CTBS scores for all the students who were tested.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Jean McLaughlin

CTBS Results*

Reading Subtests

S #	Name	Pic C	Sen C	Sto C	TOTAL C	Grade Score
38	Scott	5	7	0	12	0.6
51	Trevor	8	8	7	23	1.2
32	Doug	11	7	5	23	1.2
45	Nicole	18	7	9	24	1.2
33	Sinead	11	8	4	23	1.2
48	Jackie	10	9	12	27	1.4
52	Barret	13	4	12	29	1.6
50	Peter	11	8	11	30	1.7
47	Sandy	17	13	2	32	1.8
35	Cory	16	12	7	35	1.9
36	Jane	16	9	10	35	1.9
34	Toni	19	10	9	38	2.1
54	Tara	19	14	9	42	2.2
39	Mark	21	10	12	43	2.3
37	Brian	20	12	15	47	2.5
55	Carrie	21	12	16	49	2.6
53	Cindy	18	13	18	49	2.6
49	David	22	15	15	52	2.8
31	Candice	25	14	17	56	3.2
46	Lisa	25	14	19	58	3.4
Number Possible		27	16	23	66	

Pic C = Picture Comprehension
Sen C = Sentence Comprehension
Sto C = Story Comprehension

*Canadian Test of Basic Skills, Level 7, Form 3M, 1976.

Administered: 6, 9 May 1977 Grade 1, St. Justin
Girls: 10 Boys: 10

CTBS Results*

Reading Subtests

S #	Name	Pic C	Sen C	Sto C	TOTAL C	Grade Score
1	Brian B.	3	4	0	7	0.4
3	Zenyk	6	3	0	9	0.5
7	Gene	4	7	5	16	0.8
13	Shawn	9	0	9	18	0.9
59	James	7	7	9	23	1.2
9	Robin	10	7	6	23	1.2
4	Darcy	15	7	5	27	1.4
11	Brigette	10	7	9	26	1.4
2	Tammy	12	7	11	30	1.7
57	Rita	14	11	7	32	1.8
56	Mirella	19	9	7	35	1.9
8	Cheryl	11	14	9	34	1.9
14	John	16	13	10	39	2.1
58	Mark	20	12	10	42	2.2
60	William	20	11	12	43	2.3
61	Milena	21	13	11	45	2.4
5	Andrew	20	13	12	45	2.4
10	Darren	20	16	11	47	2.5
12	Anita	20	11	16	47	2.5
6	Brian M.	27	16	21	64	4.4
Number Possible		27	16	23	66	

Pic C = Picture Comprehension
Sen C = Sentence Comprehension
Sto C = Story Comprehension

*Canadian Test of Basic Skills, Level 7, Form 3M, 1976.

Administered: 9, 10 May 1977 Grade 1, Saint Anne

Girls: 8 Boys: 12

CTBS Results*

Reading Subtests

S #	Name	Pic C	Sen C	Sto C	TOTAL C	Grade Score
26	Lara	9	4	6	19	1.0
40	Renato	9	7	7	23	1.2
41	Theresa	13	7	5	25	1.3
28	Tommy	11	6	9	26	1.4
25	Quinten	11	9	7	27	1.4
30	Paul	20	7	0	27	1.4
42	Sonya	13	6	7	26	1.4
29	Dean	9	10	9	28	1.5
21	Amerino	9	11	8	28	1.5
17	Grant	11	10	8	29	1.6
27	Craig	15	8	8	31	1.7
24	Zebby	13	11	7	31	1.7
19	Lisa H.	16	7	12	35	1.9
22	Chrissy	16	10	11	37	2.0
15	Lee	18	9	14	41	2.2
43	Darren	22	7	17	46	2.5
18	Sheri	22	13	15	50	2.7
20	Jenny	23	12	18	53	2.9
23	Jackie	25	14	21	60	3.7
16	Lisa P.	25	14	22	61	3.8
Number Possible		27	16	23	66	

Pic C = Picture Comprehension
Sen C = Sentence Comprehension
Sto C = Story Comprehension

*Canadian Test of Basic Skills, Level 7, Form 3M, 1976.

Administered: 4 May 1977 Grade 1, Father Lacombe Elementary School
Girls: 11 Boys: 9

APPENDIX D

CLASSIFICATION SCHEME FOR RCRQ

CLASSIFICATION SCHEME FOR RCRQ

Q1: What is this? (book) What is this called?

1. book

Q2: What do you do with a book?

1. Read it

Q3: Show me where you would start.

1. cover
2. p. 2 (first story)
3. title page
4. white space
8. other

Q4: What parts do you read? Point to the parts you would read.

1. words
2. pictures

Q5: Which way would you go? Show me with your finger.

1. left-right correctly
3. right-left
8. other

Q6: What are these called (words)?

1. words
3. letters
8. other
9. I don't know (D.K.)

Q7: What are they for?

1. to read or reading
8. other

Q8: What are these called (spaces)?

1. spaces
3. middles
8. other
9. D.K.

Q9: What are they for?

1. separate the words
2. so you don't get words mixed up
3. so you don't get words stuck together
4. so the letters don't get so close
8. other
9. D.K.

Q10: What is this whole thing called (sentence)?

1. sentence
2. words
8. other
9. D.K.

Q11: What is it for?

1. to read
8. other
9. D.K.

Q12: What is this (word) made of?

1. tool to make letter, felt, pen, etc.
2. alphabets
3. individual letter-names
4. letters
5. words
8. other
9. D.K.

Q13: What are these (letters) called?

1. letters
2. words
3. individual letter-names
7. did not receive question (Q)
9. D.K.

Q14: What are they for?

1. to make words
2. spelling
3. reading
8. other
9. D.K.

Q15: Would this say "toy"?

1. yes
2. no
8. other
9. D.K.

Q16: Why?

2. if you change the "b" to "t" it would
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other

Q17: Why not?

3. because it would need a "t" at the front
8. other
9. D.K.

Q18: Pronounced word and repeated Q15.

2. no
7. didn't receive the Q.

Q19: Why not?

1. the beginning letter is different
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other

Q20: What is this called (period)?

1. period
2. dot
3. question-mark
8. other
9. D.K.

Q21: What does it tell you to do?

1. stop/rest
2. end of the word
3. end of the sentence
4. read
8. other
9. D.K.

Q22: What is this called (question mark)?

1. question mark
2. period
3. exclamation point
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q23: What does it tell you to do?

1. it's a Q
2. read on/go on
3. stop
4. end of the word
5. end of the sentence
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q24: How well do you read?

1. good
2. pretty good
3. fine
4. quite well, real well, very nice, etc.
5. not too good
8. other
9. D.K.

Q25: What makes you a (positive) reader?

1. know words
2. sound out words
3. practice
4. your head
5. read a lot
6. learn about words
8. other
9. D.K.

Q26: What makes you a (poor) reader?

1. mistakes on words
2. forget lots of words
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q27: What does a good reader have to know?

1. how to read
2. know words
3. know letters
4. sound out words
8. other
9. D.K.

Q28: When you read, why does the teacher ask questions?

1. comprehension
3. see if you know words
4. see if you know the answer
6. check how good you are in reading
8. other
9. D.K.

Q29: Should you answer all the questions?

1. yes
2. no

Q30: Why?

1. get trouble if don't
2. be polite
3. to show you know words
5. to learn
8. other
9. D.K.

Q31: Why not?

1. know words by myself
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q32: Does a good reader answer all the questions?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes
9. D.K.

Q33: Why?

2. be polite
3. knows the words
4. knows how to read well
5. likes to read
6. wants to go on to next book
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q34: Why not?

1. because they know the words
7. didn't receive the Q.
9. D.K.

Q35: Are some questions hard?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes

Q36: Why?

1. the words
2. if you don't know the answer
3. don't know what the teacher means
5. no pictures
6. don't know what the question is
7. didn't receive the Q
8. other
9. D.K.

Q37: Why not?

1. because you've been reading them
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q38: Do Mom and Dad read?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes

Q39: What do they read?

1. newspaper
2. magazines
3. information books
4. big books/storybooks/ library books
5. more than one type
6. mail
7. didn't receive the Q.
9. D.K.

Q40: Do they read the same way as you do?

1. yes
2. no
7. didn't receive the Q.
9. D.K.

Q41: How do they read?

1. in their minds
2. with their eyes
3. harder words
5. faster, better, etc.
6. not out loud, quietly, silently
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q42: Do they read to you?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes

Q43: What do they read to you?

1. books
2. little books, my books, hard books
3. stories
4. specific title
5. library books
7. didn't receive the Q.
9. D.K.

Q44: Do you speak when you read?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes
9. D.K.

Q45: Do you have to speak when you read?

1. yes
2. no
8. other
9. D.K.

Q46: Why?

1. so people hear you
2. because you're reading
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q47: How else can you read?

1. in your mind
2. just looking
3. to myself/yourself
7. didn't receive the Q.
9. D.K.

Q48: Do you always speak when you read in school?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes

Q49: Why?

1. to show the teacher
2. can't read in my head yet
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q50: Do you always speak when you read at home?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes
7. didn't receive the Q.
9. D.K.

Q51: Why?

1. parent approval
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q52: Do you need the teacher around in order to read?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes
8. other
9. D.K.

Q53: Why?

1. to help with words
2. to help me
3. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q54: Why not?

1. I can read by myself
2. I know the words
3. just sound them out
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q55: What does this (by . . .) tell you?

1. what the story is about
2. who wrote the book/story
3. beginning of the story.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q56: When Q55 was pronounced.

1. who wrote book/story
2. what the story is about
3. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q57: Where did the words come from?

1. people write them
2. bookmakers
3. letters
4. machine
5. man who wrote book wrote them
8. other
9. D.K.

Q58: Did the machine make up the words?

1. yes
2. no
7. didn't receive the Q.

Q59: What made up the words?

1. lady typing
2. people who work there
3. the machine
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other

Q60: Why did ________ make up the words?

1. for reading
2. to learn to read
3. to know what the story's about
4. to make a story/book
7. didn't receive the Q.
8. other
9. D.K.

Q61: Can you read?

1. yes
2. no

Q62: Do you want to read?

1. yes
7. didn't receive the Q.

Q63: Do you like to read?

1. yes
2. no
3. sometimes
7. didn't receive the Q.

Q64: What do you like/want to read?

1. specific title
2. school books
4. stories
5. information books
6. books
7. nothing
8. more than 1 above
9. D.K.

Q65: Why do you read in school?

1. to learn to read
2. to learn in general
3. for teacher approval
5. I have to
6. to know words
8. other
9. D.K.

Q66: Why do you read at home?

1. parent approval
2. enjoyment
3. practice
4. to know words
5. I don't (read at home)
6. to learn in general
8. other
9. D.K.

Q67: Why do other people read?

1. to learn to read
2. enjoyment
3. practice
4. to learn in general
5. to know words
8. other
9. D.K.